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THE

MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON,

AND

THE GUILT OF UNBELIEF:

Two Sermons

By REV. WILLIAM JAMES.

WITH SOME MEMORIALS OF HIS LIFE.

NEW YORK:
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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE two sermons here given represent the quality of the preaching of the late Rev. WILLIAM JAMES. Rev. HENRY NEILL, for a long time his intimate friend, was requested to furnish his recollections of Mr. JAMES, which he has done in the Letter herewith published. Rev. W. B. SPRAGUE has also consented to the republication here, of the narrative portions of his funeral discourse. Besides these, the present volume contains two Letters; one of which gives an extended statement respecting his faith and hope, written in the prospect of approaching death.

The volume is published for the sake of his friends, and in the hope also that a wider circle may find in it strength for the spiritual life.

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OUTLINE

OF

MR. JAMES'S LIFE.

OUTLINE OF MR. JAMES'S LIFE.

From the Discourse delivered at his Funeral,

By REV. WM. B. SPRAGUE.

WILLIAM JAMES, a son of William and Elizabeth (Tighlman) James, was born in this city, on the 1st of June, 1797. His father had emigrated from Ireland to this country in 1793, and was for many years among our most wealthy and influential citizens. William spent his earliest years at home, and, during part of the time, enjoyed the instruction of that justly celebrated scholar and teacher, formerly pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John McDonald. At the age of fourteen, he was admitted a member of Dr. Banks's Academy at Florida; where he completed his course preparatory to entering College. In 1813, he joined the Sophomore class of Princeton College, and in 1816 was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts; having for his classmates Governor McDowell, of Virginia, Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, Dr. McLean, the late President of the College, and several others of distinguished name. He had had religious impressions, at different periods, from early childhood, but it was not till the memorable revival of 1815 in the

College of which he was a member, that he allowed himself to hope that he had become the subject of a spiritual renovation, and, as a consequence, made a public profession of his faith. He joined the Theological Seminary at Princeton in 1816, shortly after his graduation; and, having completed his course there, and spent a short time in prosecuting his studies elsewhere, he was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Albany in September, 1820. His health being, at this time, considerably impaired, he crossed the ocean almost immediately after his licensure, and passed about twenty months, chiefly in Scotland, dividing his time between Glasgow and Edinburgh. During this period he lived in comparative retirement, conversing more with books than with men; and though within a few minutes' walk of some of the greatest spirits of the age, he seems to have studiously avoided even an introduction to them.

Shortly after his return to this country, he commenced preaching in the Murray-street Church, New York, where Dr. Mason had previously exercised his ministry, and continued thus engaged for six months. For a year and a half after this, he preached as a stated supply to a congregation formed partly from Clarkson and partly from Brockport, in the western part of this State, and then removed to Rochester, and became the pastor of the Second Church there, in which relation he continued for six years. In January, 1831, he resigned this charge and came to Sche-

nectady, where he occupied the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church, much to the satisfaction of the congregation, till July, 1832. He left this position by reason of the failure of his health; and, after a few months, returned to this his native place, and, in the fall of 1833, accepted a call to become the pastor of our Third Church. Here he remained till February, 1835, when he resigned the last charge he ever held, though he continued to have his home in the midst of us till the close of life. During the twenty-three years that have passed since that time, he has devoted himself much to philosophical and theological research, though I am not aware that any of the results of these labors have been given to the world; and whenever he has consented to occupy the pulpits of any of his brethren, here or elsewhere, I believe he has been uniformly listened to, not only with fixed attention, but with marked admiration. Of his last illness I need not speak: you all know the alternate hope and anxiety that have been expressed concerning him on every side, and how his malady has resisted all medical skill, until it has finally had its issue in his being brought hither on his way to the grave.

I trust it will not be thought an infringement of the proprieties of the hour, that I here state briefly some of my own personal recollections and impressions concerning our departed friend, that have been accumulating during a familiar acquaintance of upwards of half

a century. Our first meeting was when we both joined the Theological Seminary at Princeton in the fall of 1816. During the first month or two after we became thus associated, I had scarcely any knowledge of him except from meeting him in the class; but even then and there he developed traits of character that seemed to foreshadow the man of mark. Our acquaintance, however, after it commenced, soon became intimate; and one of the first revelations he made to me was, that he was doubtful and dissatisfied in respect to his own spiritual condition. I knew of his going to unburden his spirit to our venerable professor, Dr. Alexander, whose familiar acquaintance with all the various phases of Christian experience rendered him a most competent counsellor. I do not think that this season of darkness was of very long continuance, though I believe his religious exercises often took on a morbid cast, and always received a tinge, in a greater or less degree, from his peculiar, I might almost say unique, intellectual and moral constitution. His career in the Seminary left no one who witnessed it in doubt that he possessed talents of a very high order, especially the talent for writing and public speaking; and, if my memory is not at fault, the very finest specimens of pulpit oratory that ever I heard from him, were before he had yet entered a pulpit. Shortly after I was settled in the ministry, he came to visit me at my new home; and we passed a few days delightfully together; and he, being in an uncommonly genial and

vivacious mood, became an attraction to all whom he met. He occupied my pulpit also, and thrilled the audience by two very able and eloquent discourses. Not long after my removal to this city, he became a pastor here by the side of me, and I accounted it a privilege that I was permitted to assist in introducing him to his new charge. During his ministry here and ever since, the same fraternal relations between us that commenced at Princeton have been preserved. He has often accommodated me, and gratified my congregation, by occupying my pulpit when I have been absent; and though, when I have asked this favor of him, he has several times given me a negative answer, yet, I believe in nearly every instance, reflection has brought his kindly spirit into such vigorous exercise as to suggest to him some way in which the obstacles to a compliance with my request could be surmounted. I have seen him in every stage of his last illness, from the time that his daily labors were only occasionally interrupted by suffering, until he had fallen into that iron sleep that was ominous of immediate death; and what has impressed me, during the whole, more than any thing else, has been the perfect naturalness of his whole demeanor: in the aged suffering minister whom I saw before me, I could recognize every characteristic of my friend and classmate of 1816. I always found him cheerful, and retaining a deep interest in the past, while yet it was manifest that his thoughts were much upon the invisible and eternal. In one of our last

interviews he expressed to me, in the strongest terms possible, the sense of his own unworthiness, but added that, in God's revealed truth, he found all the needed comfort and hope. I was at his bedside after he had ceased to be conscious, and while the current of life was fast ebbing away; but I could not doubt that the sad demonstrations on which my eye rested, were only the preparation for the ascent of a ransomed spirit to its glorious, eternal home.

In what I have said of the life of our honored friend, I have supplied the material from which may be formed at least a general estimate of his character; but you will allow me, notwithstanding, to add a few words, illustrative of some of its more striking features. His mind was generally teeming with profound thought, and was never in its element while moving in a beaten track. His taste in composition was so remarkably exact as to set at defiance the sternest criticism. His discourses for the pulpit were generally elaborated with the utmost care, and it must be acknowledged were better fitted to furnish material for thought to thoroughly disciplined minds, than to minister to the gratification of the superficial and emotional hearer; though I have scarcely known any preacher who was more generally acceptable to *all* classes than he. His manner was a striking compound of earnestness and energy, that left no one in doubt that his utterances were from his inmost heart; and I have sometimes heard him, especially in his earlier days, when he rose

to a pitch of enthusiasm that might have been likened to the rushing tempest. He had a large and generous heart, that responded readily to the claims of want and woe, not only in Christian sympathy, but in liberal contributions. He was naturally impulsive, and sometimes "the sober second thought" changed his judgment and his purpose altogether; for he was too magnanimous to hold to an error for the sake of being consistent. He doubtless judged correctly in retiring from the regular duties of the ministry in his latter years; for, while he had great power in the pulpit, which he never ceased to exercise occasionally as long as his health would permit, he was fully aware that his peculiarities of temperament were not in harmony with the uniform routine of pastoral life. His high intelligence and genial spirit came out in his private intercourse, and he has left behind him many a friend who will hold these attractive qualities in grateful and enduring remembrance. I cannot forbear to mention, in this connection, a circumstance, strikingly illustrative of his character, that has been communicated to me since his death. A gentleman, now occupying one of the highest military positions in the land, informed me that, while Mr. James was a pastor at Rochester, he was himself brought to a deep sense of his sinfulness, and, through the kindness of some friend, was introduced to Mr. James as a counsellor. Instead of making particular inquiries concerning the state of his mind, as would have seemed natural, he looked at him

for a few moments in silence, and then opened the Bible, and bade him read and study the first chapter of the second Epistle of Peter, and endeavor to bring his heart and life into unison with its teachings and spirit; after which he offered a deeply solemn and fervent prayer in his behalf, and then allowed him to retire. That interview resulted in the conversion of one whose whole subsequent life has furnished the proof that there is a power in religion to withstand the temptations incident to the exercise of the highest military authority. I mention this, not so much as a gratifying instance of the good effect of his ministry, as an illustration of the peculiar manner in which he exercised it. It is safe to say that his noble qualities of mind and heart have impressed themselves deeply on his contemporaries; while the peculiarity, I may say the originality, of his entire character will help to keep the impression more vivid, and to render it more enduring.

VIEW OF MR. JAMES'S CHARACTER AND LIFE:

IN A LETTER COMMUNICATED,

By REV. HENRY NEILL.

My dear Sir:

I HAVE received your request; but we have all felt that a peculiar and formidable obstacle presents itself in every attempt to give a definite outline to the character or gifts of Mr. James.

I refer to that breadth and universality which constituted his identity; and which caused a conductor of the public press in Albany to write, "We know of no pen or voice capable of rendering his qualities adequate justice."

Many persons of no ordinary intellect have said, that, when in his presence, they were always affected with a sense of awe at the magnitude and variety of his inherited force and faculty, at his instinctive discernments, and the scope of his carefully gained acquisitions.

And yet who that saw him often, had any doubt that he held himself singularly indifferent to every form of natural bestowment, and of external advan-

tage (in which also he largely shared), by reason of a master passion of surpassing beauty and power constantly working in him, even a never-ceasing desire to be in harmony with the Divine mind, in spirit, and in movement? He panted after God, and assimilation to Him in impulse and in action, as the hart panteth after the water-brooks. "I want holiness so much," he writes, in a letter dated December, 1856, "that I might say I want nothing else. One additional grain of holiness or conformity to God, with a consciousness that God was pleased with it, would outweigh a universe of every other kind of good." This statement contains the key-note of his life. The desire expressed in it, animated him at Princeton; led him to Dr. Gordon rather than to Chalmers, at Edinburgh; absorbed him at New York on his return from Scotland, when preaching to crowded assemblies from the pulpit made vacant by the death of Dr. John Mason; gave direction to his thoughts at Rochester, so much so that he was known as "the minister who desired to be sanctified;" and, since then, has been ever revealing itself, in letters; in the selection of friends; in the choice of books; in themes for sermons; in essays; in conversation; in journeyings (for he never hesitated to travel a hundred miles to visit one whose doubts or fears he could not allay by his pen); in the language and tone of his devotions, never to be forgotten by any who ever heard his words in prayer; until desire merged itself into a *knowledge* and *enjoy-*

ment of God, seldom granted in this world to the fallen sons of men. The unrest that at times appeared in him grew out of a sorrow often expressed and painfully active, that he was not, to his own consciousness, perfectly "conformed to the image" of God's dear Son.

Greatly did many of his friends admire the type of his piety, in its deep undertone, as well as in its strains of faith and hope and victory. But I shall not attempt to describe its nature, or its sources, or its growth (although he has revealed these in his letters), any more than to measure the faculties through which it flowed.

The most that I shall now venture to give utterance to, in relation to Mr. James, and that not without misgiving, is an impression, which fastened itself upon me as soon as I knew him; which grew more distinct during fifteen years of unreserved intercourse; and which lost nothing of its depth or tenacity, as sickness and extreme torture, and a conscious approach to the solemnities of eternity, did their dissolving and sanctifying work.

Whatever might be the theme of his conversation, or the character of the labor he was devising or executing, I felt that I was in the presence of one, in whom, although "subject to like passions as we," the desire to be "at one with God," not only regulated powers of vast compass, and sensibilities charged with vitality, but organized and gave unity to the movement of a nature of immense volume; so that it was compelled

to be constantly useful, on a scale commensurate with its capacity; and yet so constrained by its own ideals to depreciate itself, that it did the grand work it was called to, with seldom an apprehension that it was doing any thing.

It was a splendid sight to see him from 1852 to 1856, as I did, every summer at Lenox, with his vigorous intellect, his wealth of feeling, his firmly knit frame, his eye that expanded and kindled so immediately as ideal themes were introduced; but it was sublime to know him from 1862 to 1868, after his theology was adjusted; after doubts had ceased to make their appearance; after nature had yielded to the spirit; when every material symbol, and every human relationship, constantly reminded him of its counterpart in spiritual bonds or Christian joys; when he began to view the things of time from very much the same stand-point that it is supposed redeemed men look at them after they have left the body; when his union with or absorption in God seemed to gain rapid increase from month to month; and when, without losing a particle of his manly charity and prodigal generosity and intellectual intrepidity, he seemed ready at any moment (save for that never-satisfied and aching thirst for greater conformity to the Divine mind) to enter upon the employments and enjoyments of immortality.

His theory of the way to grow in spiritual attainments wrought so effectually in him that, what was

desire in his earlier life, and in his mature manhood, seemed to be in fulfilment or fruition as he ripened in years, and reconciled his philosophy with the words and promises of Scripture.

Hence, I have felt, that, if he does most for his race who reveals to his fellow-mortals most of the true God, and in such a way that they shall receive and rejoice in the knowledge conferred, Mr. James must ever stand high among the benefactors of his generation. The knowledge which he imparted so earnestly, eloquently, and unremittingly from his pen and voice, and from the purchase and distribution in uncounted numbers of any books which might further his purpose, he gained at a great cost, and by the exercise of powers of a high philosophic order.

Having for many years accustomed himself to construct his theological system, and to gain his conceptions of Jehovah mainly from the justice of God as reflected in the conscience, it was an era of great delight and of vastly augmented capacity to confer blessings upon others, when he reconstructed that system so as to make *love*, God's central attribute, and human affections and intimate human relationships the organs and types through which that marvellous love was recognized and reflected. At the same time he relinquished naught of his reverence and awe for the holiness of Jehovah.

Hence a knowledge of man, as to his nature and susceptibilities, was a study of profound interest with him.

"Without some anthropology, or true philosophy of man," he says in a letter of March 4, 1862, "it is impossible to construct a treatise of sanctification. Upham's, as I think, being unsound; and knowing of no other which has ever been applied to this subject with fearless logic (unless it is Emmon's, which is far worse), I have been compelled to wait until a scheme has formed itself in my own mind. The ground principle of it came to me as early as 1846. I felt that without allowing much more for man's original, natural similitude to God, than was allowed in the common notions of people and books, no doctrine of sanctification, however scriptural and sacred it might appear, could be made distinct in theory, or efficient in practice. . . . The social and religious instincts in man, which appear simultaneously with the dawn of self-consciousness, and for a time take distinct courses, are tending continually by the laws of Providence to merge into unity; and as thus identified, — that is, as far as they are, — they become the true life of humanity. Sanctification is the identification of the social and the religious instincts; the religious being the culmination of the social. This is the thought which has been working in the upper or philosophical chamber of my soul since 1846; whilst the fires of purgatory have been working destruction to every mundane interest in the heart beneath. This is the philosophic principle. Parallel with this runs the scriptural principle, that Christ is the true bridegroom of the soul."

The practical working, and not a little of the nature of the theory of holier living, which interested Mr. James at this time, is very impressively put forth in a letter, to an inquiring friend, on the benefit of trials. In this he writes, —

"From your talking of falling back on 'the Evidences,' as well as from some other indications, I could not but have a misgiving that you were finding almost as much difficulty as ever with the '*contents*' of Revelation.

"Perfectly persuaded as I am, not only of the genuineness of your faith in those contents, but that I thoroughly understood also the most interior causes of its weakness, nothing restrained me from writing long ago but the impossibility of compressing my solution of your difficulties within any reasonable bounds, which indeed is no tax upon me; for of all earthly occupations, there is none which gives me such pleasure as the endeavor to strengthen the weak; but I have feared you might *think* it was a tax.

"To relieve you, then, as much as possible of all such feelings, let me first say, that an occasional letter, of the kind I am about to write to you, is not only necessary as satisfying the longings of friendship, but nothing else is so important to keep up my spirit in the work with which I am at present mainly occupied.

"I proceed, therefore, at once circumferentially as usual, rather than diametrically; first, to take an observation for the purpose of determining exactly where

you are in your course heavenward, and then, to solve some of the doubts and perplexities by which your aspirations are checked and your progress impeded."

Then follow twenty pages minutely noticing the difficulties in the way of faith and assurance.

Toward the close he adds, —

"I have said that the spring of the Divine life in the soul is a desire toward God, based originally upon a sense of His perfection, but called into immediate and lively action by the expression of His peculiar affection for us.

"The measure of our inward life will always correspond to the degree in which we are sensible of His *favor;* a sense of this, such as we never had before, though it may still be comparatively faint, always marks the era of our conversion.

"It is an intimation, or what is so considered, of God's love to us, which first awakens the sentiment of love to Him. It is then, that in Him whom we have hitherto regarded only as our judge, we begin to recognize the love of a Father, and in this love we find for a time our supreme felicity. Of course how to retain this love, how to entitle ourselves to a fuller expression of it, how this new-born happiness may be enlarged and perpetuated, becomes the object of our chief solicitude.

"We feel that nothing can assure us of this but a life of holiness, meaning by this a life in which the love of God is perpetually triumphant over the love of

the world. But we too often find, that, whilst conscience is strongly on the side of God, not without a better feeling arising from a sense of His kindness and generosity; and whilst the will under this twofold pressure is making a constant and often a most earnest effort to be faithful, — some of our liveliest affections (hope and desire) are still so much in the interest of the world, that little or nothing comes of all our endeavors. We make no advance; we often question whether the heart's union with God, which we hoped would soon be perfect, is even begun. We become despondent of our ability ever to attain a life of holiness.

"If we do not yield wholly to the tempter, we wage but a feeble conflict; our prayers, which ought to be full of confidence, being chiefly confessions of shame and deprecations of the Divine judgment. Often should I have perished by the secret abandonment of my hope, but for one principle which has always saved me from such a catastrophe even at the lowest ebb of my affairs, and which now revealed, in the strongest light and in its full meaning, by the horrid darkness, which was ever thickening around me, at last brought me a complete and final deliverance.

"It was simply the principle of *justification by faith alone*, which means, when fully understood, that God's love is *always* wholly irrespective of our character, or of our love to Him. You will readily see, that the tendency of the principle, seemingly so clear and certain,

that continuance in the love of God could only be assured by a life of holiness, connected with utter failure to attain such a life, would be to remit one again from grace to justice, from the blessed refuge which had been found in a father's bosom, to the prison-house of the law.

"But there was this difference between my prison-house experiences before and after any true acquaintance with the gospel. In the former state, I knew no way of getting out. I was a prisoner for life and for ever. In the latter, my faith in the doctrine always let me out, when matters came to the worst. But still I was let out rather as a reprieved criminal, subject to be remanded again by my shortcomings, and very certain to be so remanded; for how to avoid these shortcomings and their direful retribution, I knew not. I had continual desire, and continual disappointment. Now, to such I aver, that the *very* good which we lose and are ever losing in created things may be found for ever in God.

"I cannot conceive, that any dread of a hereafter, with the proffer of a release from its terrors, or the considerations which are addressed to conscience merely, powerful as those considerations are to awaken attention, are ever sufficient to conquer the love of the world. Nor can I conceive that any sense of the Divine authority and perfection, unaccompanied by a special tender of His love to us and a promise of the *most intimate and endearing* personal fellow-

ship, could do it. The love of God which repels all rival affections, springs not primarily from a sense of His perfection, however that may command our esteem and reverence, but from a belief or sense of His infinite *affection*.

"This was what the gospel tendered me; and for this I forsook as well as I could, as far as a feeble faith could carry me, the pleasures of the world. But how has this promise been verified? How is it consistent with this grievous experience? *Consistent with it!* In the light which I have long since acquired, these trials have become the crowning proof of it. For many years I have been in the habit of returning as heartfelt thanks for the discipline of God's providence, as for the love of His promises; so plain it is, that I have been saved by the combination.

"I have long since learned that continuance in the love of God is not assured by a life of holiness, and never was intended to be. It is assured by the work of Christ *for us*, and trusting in that work, or resting upon it, one may be just as certain of his interest in His love, as if he were already in glory; 'for whomsoever He justifies, them He also glorifies.' But what is the meaning of these trials? They are the beginning of our glorification; the essential means of it. They are the plucking up of the weeds which hinder the growth of the good seed. They are the answer to our daily prayers, 'lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.' So far from being the expres-

sion of God's anger on account of remaining sin, they express His unchanging purpose to make us holy.

"He sees us in our folly still cleaving to the world, but yet with some sincere desire toward Him. He is determined that the desire shall not be disappointed, and therefore that the folly shall be utterly purged out; not a particle of it shall remain. It is sometimes a very long work, but not necessarily so; and it is always a sure one.

"Often, as it became manifest that my desire for some temporal or spiritual blessing was going to be denied, and denied entirely, the shadows of death compassed me; for an absolute denial seemed equivalent to His saying that He had no regard for me. He would not give me the temporal blessing, nor seemingly any thing spiritual to make up for the loss of it. Then called I on the name of the Lord: O Lord! I beseech thee deliver my soul. And lo! what is this change that has come over me? — not in a moment nor in a month, but as the result of all this discipline. In the utter wreck and ruin of worldly ambition and hope, I find a joy, in comparison with which their highest realization would have been an empty shadow.

"To a little child the conduct of the husbandman in putting his ploughshare through a field of showy wild flowers, leaving in their place nothing but ugly furrows, would be any thing but pleasing. It would give but little relief to see him throwing a small seed into the furrows too insignificant to be noticed, and then

burying it entirely out of sight, by the rude operation of the harrow. And yet, if the husbandman were his father, and should tell him, that out of this destruction should spring up in a little while a world of far higher fertility and beauty, he might be reconciled for that 'little while' by faith in the paternal promise. Through me the FATHER tells you that the very thing you desire, but glorious as to measure and quality beyond any conception of it you can now form, will, in a 'little while,' be yours.

"'Behold I come quickly.'

"You will find a marvellous strictness of truth in all that He says. He means *very quickly*. His coming seems slow to us only because we are children. Three weeks to a child who is expecting his good things, at the Christmas holidays, seems an age. But when they have come, your only wonder, when you consider their glory, will be, how they could have come so soon."

Nor did Mr. James, as has been intimated, in thus magnifying the desirableness and necessity of an abiding view of God's love, for the establishment and growth of any trembling believer, in the Christian life, lose sight of holiness as an attribute of the true God, and of the indispensableness of an awful sense of it for the proper construction and reception of any system of religious truth.

He believed, with Dr. A. A. Hodge, that "holiness with God is no more optional than is existence. That

it stands to sin, as immutable hatred and vindicatory justice. So thoroughly impressed was he that Jehovah was a Being of inherent and absolute justice, that he does not hesitate to write, that "the love to his offspring in the paternal bosom is not so strong as the love of truth and honor and integrity; and that in case of a conflict between them, there is an end of the social bond."

The letter in which this statement appears, contains a critique on Maurice, in which Mr. James says: "Notwithstanding his show of qualities which, among theologians are rare; his talking always to the heart, and yet always through the understanding, but particularly by his most ingenious, and in some instances successful efforts to harmonize and almost identify the dogmas of the church with the demands of our nature; to say nothing of his powers as a wit and thinker, his affluent yet simple diction, his masterly ease, the great compass of his thoughts, and the fulness of his sympathy; I have no doubt he is unsound, according to any Orthodox standard. I look upon him as a Christian, and surely a most accomplished man; a man, however, of more acumen than piety, like Origen and so many other great lights, — of more ambition than of faith and love.

"I think I have a very clear idea of the *root* of all his errors. The end of all his refinement is to vindicate and magnify the love of God. But he does this by virtually denying the Divine holiness, by shutting

his eyes to the worst effect of sin, and that in which the evil nature specially appears; viz., the wound which it inflicts on God's moral sensibilities, which is the cause of His wrath against it, a wrath which fills the earth with judgments and burns to the lowest hell. The whole evil of sin, as Maurice views it, appears in its natural (not judicial) effect upon the mind of the sinner; its only effect upon the mind of God is to excite His pity.

"Occasionally, an expression may occur which intimates more, but it is meant evidently to conciliate Orthodoxy, and in any deep sense is repudiated by his system. I cannot learn from him, that God hates sin with a perfect hatred. It grieves him as the transgression of a child grieves a parent, but it does not provoke Him to threaten it in good earnest with everlasting punishment. On the contrary, the *only* effect of sin upon God, as far as I can learn from Maurice, is to bring out in all its intensity His love to man. Love, according to Maurice, is comprehensive of holiness. They cannot be distinguished. The very holiness of God, therefore, obliges Him to save man from the effects of sin. That the result of his system is a refined universalism, there can be no doubt. In his last essay he is forced to confess it. For what else can he mean by the paragraph on page 360?

"My grand objection to his system is, that by divesting sin of its worst aspect, he robs the love of God of its highest and its most peculiar manifestation.

If I did not believe that the holiness of God was something which could be distinguished from His love; something, in virtue of which He hated sin, and was bent upon its punishment, and with the same intense sincerity with which in virtue of the other he pities the sinner, and is bent upon his deliverance, it seems to me that neither my misery as a subject of wrath, nor God's love in giving His Son, nor Christ's agony to save me, would have the same effect upon my heart and conscience which they have now. You will observe that Maurice has no conception of any relation between God and man, but that of Father and child. Nor do men — whilst they are sinning, and intending to sin — look upon God as their Father.

"But suppose, to give the greater force to our view, that God *is* their Father. Is He nothing but a Father? Does not every child know that the parent is also a man? and that, as such, he is governed by other affections besides love to his offspring? that behind that love which beams in the paternal face, there are other qualities calculated to awaken fear? that love to his offspring, however strong in the paternal bosom, is not strong enough to set aside the love of truth, of honor, and of integrity; and that, in case of a conflict between the social bond and the bond of moral principle, the love is supplanted by the workings of the moral nature?"

With such a view of the Divine perfections; with his singularly active and sensitive conscience, so ready

to reflect the justice of Jehovah; with a mind deeply lacerated at any want of conformity to the Law of God; and with a vigorous imagination, always magnifying his own defects, it is not strange that Mr. James held, and with all his might, to the righteousness of Christ as the ground of his acceptance with the Father; nor that he should have expressed his belief in it, with strong confidence and joy, and taken pains to show its connection with those attainments in holiness after which he aspired. So many are the letters which he has written, so varied the utterances which he has made, on this point, that it is difficult to select from them.

"I have been convinced from the Scriptures, that, just as certainly as it is God's will that we should be holy and glorify Him in our lives, it is His will also that we first believe in His Son, of which the main, and almost the engrossing idea, is — to express it in the language of Edwards — that we should 'hide ourselves in the ample folds of the robe of His righteousness,'" he writes, in 1853; and adds, "The principle which gives life to the soul, is, that we are *justified by a work wrought wholly out of ourselves;* and gradually sanctified by trusting it as such, — by holding fast for ever that idea. This is the Pauline doctrine. And Olshausen's peculiar merit is, that he maintains it with more learning and skill and boldness than any other equally profound expositor. He has not more learning than Tholuck. But he has more genius, and, appar-

ently, a stronger experience; although, in this respect, Tholuck is not defective. I must say, that Neander on John disappoints me. He is a great historian, a wonderful philosophizer of history; but, of the milk of the Word, he is rather a diluter." Then he adds, "Let me quote from Olshausen on Romans, iv. 3–5: 'If faith turns away from its proper object, the Christ without us, and the objective purpose of God in man's redemption, and directs itself to the Christ within us, as the ground, not the consequence, of redemption; and if the man only considers himself the object of the Divine favor, because he discovers Christ in himself, and only as long as this is the case, then faith altogether loses its proper nature, and the man falls again under the Law.'"

After carefully commenting upon each chapter of an elaborate work recently published upon the sacrifice of Christ, Mr. James writes: "Upon my mind the fact of an Atonement, in the orthodox sense of a satisfaction to Justice, is fixed more firmly than ever." "Christ suffered *for us* in a sense in which the other persons of the Trinity did not. But for the really vicarious sufferings of the Son restoring our filial relations, we should never have had their sympathy at all, but only their antagonism. Apart from this, their sympathy had been wholly with the Law, not with its violators. Christ's sufferings were undertaken and endured to redeem us from this antagonism, to which the purity of the Divine nature, its sense of wrong, its necessary

sympathy with the Law, in a word, had otherwise consigned us. His suffering was really vicarious; theirs, anterior to His, only such, at the most, as the judge, who is also a man, feels for the prisoner at his bar.

"The Second Person of the Trinity undertakes to save both the Law and its victim, by placing himself under the Law as a substitute for the guilty. The Father, loving the world, accepted the proffered mediation. He so loved the world, that He gave — spared not — His own Son, but gave Him to be a propitiation for our sins." Mr. James declares that the root of the error of the writer whom he was criticising, lies in this, "He conceives of God as though He were nothing more than an Infinite man;" and adds, "With me the study of years has been to mediate between love and justice, both of them essential elements of the Divine Righteousness; and, seeing a new matter here proposed, I was tempted to accept it at once, without allowing my critical, or even my logical, forces to come into action, and so I allowed it for a time to run away with me, and thought, until this second revision, that I had found the treasure hid in the field. But it appears, according to this book, that justice, or the principle which necessitates penalty for the violation of Law, is not included in God's essential righteousness. It is simply a matter of policy; and thus the absolute ill-desert of sin, a fiction; and conscience, a provisional faculty for giving this fiction temporarily the force of a reality."

Thus we learn the doctrinal basis of those letters on progress in holiness, on the way to get rid of disturbing doubts, and to triumph over easily besetting sins, which Mr. James was always writing to any mind whom he thought would receive his counsels, and be benefited by his correspondence. It is marvellous with what industry, cheerfulness, persistence, and fidelity, he gave himself to this work. The labors of men on their sermons, and in their parishes, were light compared with the epistolary toils he voluntarily imposed upon himself, and with delight carried on year after year, through nearly a whole life-time.

A most interesting and remarkable volume could be made from his letters to souls inquiring after peace; and another, from words, addressed to those thirsting for a more entire conformity to the Divine Will than their vagrant affections had permitted them to reach. Each of these would be a model in literature, and a cardiphonia in religion. And not less valuable and voluminous treatises could be compiled from his criticisms on authors, especially on those who attempted to reconcile the ways of God with reason, equity, and the wants of humanity. The explication (as he terms it) of John, xiv. 21–23, furnishes a specimen of his epistolary exegesis. I wish it were possible, within the limits intended, to insert, at this place, one of his letters, in which he gives his views of the position which love should hold as compared with justice, in the directions to be given to any one suffering, without allevia-

tion, under the condemnation of the Law; and another, showing how "Faith is the germ of the new man coming to the birth; which *new* man, created in regeneration, is absolutely pure."

"Therefore," he adds, as Olshausen says, "salvation is not to be considered as depending upon the development of the Christ in us, but only our degree of glorification. Therefore may the believer, however backward his development, of which he is abundantly conscious, look toward death without anxiety for his salvation. The Christian has, neither before nor after his conversion, to generate an independent sanctification of his own; but he has only constantly to receive the stream of the influential powers of Christ's life upon him: just as the tree, when the development of its germ is begun, has only to suck in water, air, and light, in order to unfold itself from within; and all the drawing of a stupid gardener at the branches, all his working at the buds to coax forth blossoms, can only disturb, but never further, its development."

What a treasure, the deep, earnest, prolonged, tenderly appreciating sympathy, and the knowledge pressed forth by it in those letters, would be, to those desiring to see more of Mr. James, and to know the truth as it is in Christ, and in a gifted servant of God who struggled so to put Christ on. Nor would they be any less so, because he constantly depreciated his own attainments. He ever illustrated what Trench says: —

"Only when we love, we find
How far our heart has come behind
The love we ought to show."

But there is so much that is personal in these communications, such frank statements of his own sorrows and defeats (by detailing which, as well as by opening up the path and steps of his deliverance, he sought to encourage others), that we hesitate to lay their contents, unabridged, before any human eyes, save those for whom the lines were prodigally and accurately penned. And yet how can any one obtain a proper impression of the man, or of his doctrine, apart from a glimpse, at least, of his correspondence? Its first sentence reveals the object of the following extract from one of his letters:

"Remember that your greatest difficulty will always arise, as it always has arisen, from *legality;* not from any want of earnestness, but from the idea that a certain amount of earnestness is necessary before you can feel the embrace of Christ's love, or before, at least, you can appropriate His fulness. The whole subject has two sides, and it is extremely difficult to put forth one as strongly as it ought to be, without seeming to contravene the other; and yet they are perfectly harmonious. Let me show you how they became one, in my own case. For a long time I was in precisely the condition which, in my last letter, I assumed to be yours; conscious of a state in which worldly and spiritual affections were perpetually contending, the

former sustained by deeply rooted and long-matured habit, constantly acted on by outward temptations; the latter, by a very little precious experience, and by the promise that, with perseverance in prayer, they should prevail at last. At any time I would have been most willing to terminate the conflict by giving up the world, if I knew how to do it, — how to get it out of my heart. The things which I would, I did not; and the things which I hated, those I did. I felt myself a miserable captive, sold under sin. I saw no way of deliverance, but by some Divine manifestation which would completely win my affections; and, for this, I was always sighing and praying. But I had the idea, also, that this manifestation was in some way conditional upon some act of my own will, — upon an entire self-surrender. How often and long have I labored to do that thing, hoping that the happy hour was not distant when I should do it so thoroughly that God would withhold Himself no longer, and then I should be free! But that hour never came. I never became conscious of surrendering all to God, until some time after I had become perfectly assured that God had freely given Himself to me. But understand what I mean by this. I do not mean until God had revealed Himself to me in a personal manner, but until I had become practically convinced and settled in the doctrine that the love of God was a fountain for humanity; free, in all its fulness, to every one who desired it; that nothing at all was required to make it mine;

that it was mine now, in virtue of what Christ had done for me, — to which nothing could be added by any self-surrender, or any act of mine whatever. This was the doctrine which, as I have told you, brought me out of my first bondage; and every step which I have taken since toward a higher freedom, has been impelled by a fresh sense of it coming to me, for the most part, not when most conscious of fidelity to Him, but when most conscious of incurable faithlessness. The utter failure of all my own efforts to do any thing for my own cure, and the repeated experience of God's forgiving mercy and tender interest in me notwithstanding, have, at length, broken the power of legality entirely. I see plainly that I shall be saved in spite of myself. I no longer try to *prepare* myself for a Divine blessing or manifestation, by any acts of self-denying devotion, because I feel that God's free loving-kindness makes them entirely unnecessary. But what is the effect of this view of the freeness of salvation? It compels me to do, as a matter of delight, what I never could do as a matter of duty. I surrender all to God, as naturally as I breathe; not as a condition of receiving something from Him, for in Christ and with Christ I am now persuaded He has given me every thing; and, among other things, I surrender, also, this long desire for a personal manifestation, which I perceive has been selfish in its spring. I want such a manifestation, indeed, but I want it now entirely for His sake; because it will enable me to

serve Him better. In this view I labor for it constantly; perfectly submissive, however, while it is withheld; rejoicing to serve Him by contending with obstructions; always assured of His love, not on the ground of any personal communication, but of His general word to humanity, of which experience has made me a believer. It is just in this way that you will receive all that you are expecting: by giving God glory for what you have received in common with the race; by getting into the habit of assuming that what you are seeking, viz., God's love, in all its fulness, is already yours. Sin and the world are already conquered as far as that persuasion is rooted in you; what remains of their power shall be entirely destroyed, by your holding it fast in all trials. This is the only act of will to which I would now encourage you. In a little while God's glory will be a constant, loving manifestation."

Perhaps I might insert a portion of another, written to one importunately desiring some personal manifestation of Christ to the soul, —

. . . "What makes our life a bondage is, that the element of faith in the Saviour which is mixed with it, is so little. It saddens us chiefly to think what a dishonor such a life is to the Divine goodness, to the provisions of the gospel, to the self-sacrificing love and condescension and faithfulness of the Good Shepherd. Why should we be so anxious and unsettled and distrustful and joyless when such a Friend

has died for us, lives for us, and is ever, if there is any truth in the gospel, engaged to give efficacy to our prayers, and reality to our hopes? How can we be so heartless, when wooed by such importunity of self-devoting love? It is found in experience, that a little ingenuous confidence is not enough to break our bondage; but a little added to that, and a little more to that, will at last do it. Suppose Christ should reveal Himself personally to you, and should say to you, 'My little one' (the name, you know, which He gives to the least and weakest of His people), 'My little one, so unlovely and unworthy in your own eye, you are most precious in mine. I love you with a love which has no dependence upon your character, but rather has been excited by your utter helplessness, your poverty, your meanness, your weakness, your troubles and dangers, your bondage and misery, of which you are so sensible: these are your recommendations; these are your claims upon my sympathy; these are the bonds by which you will for ever hold me. Henceforth you have nothing to do but to give me your confidence. And that I ask, not because any deficiency in it will turn my heart away from you, but only for your own sake. I want "your joy to be full." My love is free and pure and disinterested. It cannot be changed, but only be made more resolute, by your infirmities and dangers; though, to your own consciousness, — until your faith is recovered, — it must, of course, always appear otherwise. But your salva-

tion cannot fail. My honor is engaged for it. I have betrothed you to myself for ever, and there is nothing which my love can do for you, for which you may not at once command it. Begin the trial of it immediately, cast all your care upon me, and, when the enemy appears, let it be a powerful worldly affection, a strong inducement to rest in the creature, instead of going on to seek your rest and happiness in me; or, let it be a sense of coldness, and a want of confidence, which you think must provoke my displeasure, — let it take what form it may, just come to me, and, if you cannot speak for your confusion, just say, in sobs and sighs, O my Jesus, my Jesus, my Jesus! Thou seest my misery, Thou knowest I cannot conquer this temptation, — yet Thou knowest, too, how I desire to conquer it, — and Thou hast told me never to doubt either Thy power or Thy love. Allured by Thy promises of certain victory in every conflict, I have cast away my own strength, and now trust entirely in Thine. And wilt Thou deceive me? never, never! Though Thou slay me, I will trust Thee!'

"You tell me, perhaps, that Christ has not yet revealed Himself to you in the manner described. Let it be so. But has He not thus revealed Himself to humanity, to our nature? Is not this the exact significance of the Gospel Revelation, taking it as a whole? Is not this just what is meant by the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge? And is He not

thus revealed generally, in order that any one who will, any one who is athirst for such a Saviour, and such a salvation, may make a personal appropriation of Him, and of it? and just as minute and particular an appropriation as he pleases to make, — too particular it cannot be. The true and only foundation of confidence in Christ is the record which is given in the Scriptures of His life and character, of His relations to God, and His relations to humanity; and the motive to confidence, — to a personal appropriating faith, is the desire of the soul for just such a Saviour, and such a salvation, — its deep and everlasting wants, which only such a salvation and such a Saviour can relieve. It is certainly true, that the faith inspired by the general revelation is infinitely vivified by the personal. But still the general revelation is the foundation; and it is only by venturing, by suspending the whole weight of the soul's cares, desires, and hopes on that revelation, and in proportion as we do so, that we can reach any thing special and personal. Do you not see that a confidence, produced by a particular revelation of His affection for you, would be a very poor act on your part, a very poor test of the state of your heart toward Him?

"Desire the personal expression as strongly as you please, thirst for it as the water of Life, for it is so; and be perfectly sure you shall obtain it. Only remember that the way to it, to its first, and to every other, degree of it, is by faith in the yet unseen. Rejoice that your dear Lord gives you the opportunity of show-

ing how much you can trust Him. Say to Him boldly, I am now so certain of Thy free and unmeasurable love, that I will henceforth ask for no expression from Thee but what is necessary to Thine own glory; but this I must have. I must serve Thee. Thou only art worthy! Whatever is necessary to break in pieces this selfish heart, and to create an entirely new heart within me, — a heart in which Thou shalt entirely reign, — that is all I want. If it is necessary for a farther discovery of the root of evil in me, that Thou shouldst withhold a little longer the tokens of Thy special regard, behold my submission. Only let me have the privilege of calling Thee mine, until such time as Thou pleasest to give my hand, now outstretched in darkness, that firm grasp which shall make it sure for ever."

To more than one individual did Mr. James write an hundred such letters. Indeed, he has scarcely an acquaintance that is not in possession of many. From no painstaking did he shrink, could he only thus lift the burden from a suffering soul. Never did they that watch for the morning, wait for the breaking of the day with half the anxiety that he did to see the shadows flee away from a clouded mind. And how he rejoiced when his hope was not disappointed! "The note of victorious faith which rings in your later letters, is more to me than the success of Solferino. Your freedom comes nearer home to me than the freedom of Italy, much as I desire the latter," are his words.

What teacher ever strove harder to instruct? What minister to comfort or build up? Why should he not select his own channels of industry in the vineyard where such a variety of husbandry was needed? Why should he chide himself for not assuming the mechanical toils of a parish, when he was ever lavishly expending his strength in the pulpits of his brethren, that they might recover theirs? From no desire to throw off responsibility, or to rid himself of the obligations which belong to the sacred office, was he without a charge. His door-plate, on which was inscribed "Rev. William James," bears witness to this. When asked, "Why did you have the 'Reverend' engraved there?" he replied, "I was determined that people should know that I had not withdrawn myself from any duty imposed by my ordination."

At another time, when wounded by a remark upon his recluse and studious habits, he wrote: "How often have people said to me, 'If you had only been a poor man, and compelled to work'! Compelled to work, indeed! The only effect of poverty would have been to make me work for a lower object, and to contract the universality and destroy the ideality of my nature. Do not let poverty, or the prospect of it, have any such effect upon you. I did not need the stimulus of poverty; a far stronger stimulus was the disgrace which is attached, in this age and country, to a recluse or unofficial life. For this I have suffered (for the sake of humanity) a conscious martyrdom for many years,

to retain my own manhood; and thus the power of serving humanity, whether ever called into action or not. How God has sustained me, has been a perfect wonder to me. I have been, in the words of the Psalmist, 'a wonder unto many,' but also a wonder to myself. But God is my strong refuge. Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise and Thy honor all the day. Cast me not off in my old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth. As the result of this enduring loyalty to ideas, I am now on the verge of failing years, and, possibly, very near my end. But I am in possession of a faith, a hope, and a charity, which are more than a compensation for all the struggle and the sacrifice. Let me, then, entreat you to be of good courage. You may have to endure much worldly disappointment. Till you become indurated, you will have to endure it; but the reward is certain."

And these words came from a brain and heart that (as he once said) did more work in a year than some of those who are lashed to work by the thong of poverty have done in a lifetime.

His pulpit labors alone were enough to consume the vigor and time of most men. He never hesitated to preach for weeks and weeks, for churches or ministerial brethren, whose burdens were heavy. And how did he preach? With the truth so deeply planted not only in his intellect, but in his sensibilities, it was to be expected that Mr. James would be an impressive preacher. But when it is remembered, that his voice

was like an organ for depth and compass, and also resonant with feeling; and his mode of composition such that each separate sentence was full of meaning, and closely related to that which went before and followed it, — it is not surprising that he reminded many of Robert Hall, in his purity of diction, and in the emphasis of his utterance. He organized his thoughts slowly and with great deliberation; hence, when they were delivered on the paper or from the pulpit, they were almost perfect in their vesture and form. He was accustomed to read and meditate much before he wrote; so that his manuscripts contained the invincible judgments of his soul. And his style of speech manifested this. In conversation it was often rapid and enthusiastic. From the pulpit it was more measured. There he spake "as one having authority." His idea of the care in preparation demanded of one who would attempt, by interpreting the word of God, to guide the souls of men, was expressed somewhat by him, when to a friend he said "If I take a text from the inspired volume, and do not, to the utmost extent of my capacity and powers, fathom and exhaust its meaning, I feel that I am a doomed man." Hence, great solemnity, and manifest exercise of the reflective faculties, characterized his sermons. I refer more particularly to those on "God a Sun;" on the text, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" the series on the Atonement, and a single sermon on Faith. The wonder was, that in the discussion of

such themes, in his exhaustive manner, he should have made every one of his hearers feel as he did, whether they understood him or not, that the fire of intense convictions, relating to the life or death of the soul, burned in the breast of him who was giving his thoughts to them.

Remarkable, however, as were his sermons, they were excelled by his devotional exercises. They moved the heart to tears; they rekindled its hope. No one can forget the impression made by them. The mind that in preaching, and in conversation, and in meditation, opened so readily to the being and perfections of God, seemed in prayer to be lifted into His actual presence. Absolved from the ordinary conditions of thought, yet never violating them, Mr. James appeared to absorb the affection of the Creator, and to gain a vision of the ineffable glory as he approached the throne of the heavenly grace. Yet in that august pavilion his tones were not those of a stranger, but rather those of one to whom the Lord had been and would be a dwelling-place in all generations. What tenderness, what faith, what adoration were there! what a hiding under the shadow of the Almighty, what communion of the finite with the Infinite, what earnestness of intercession, what a venturing upon the promises! Then it was that "he endured as seeing One who is invisible; and talked with God, as a man talketh with his friend." A judge of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, who frequently heard him

preach, remarked, "I should be amply repaid for coming to church when he is in the pulpit, could I hear only the Invocation."

Many may desire to know more about the natural stock, the early associations, the instinctive impulses, the human traits of one who could thus live and write and preach and pray. His blood was a mixture of Irish and Dutch; Irish on the father's side, and Dutch on the mother's. He carried in himself the fire and sensibility of the one nation, with the depth and power of endurance in the other: an extraordinary and splendid combination. Withal, he had a most vigorous physical constitution, a fine head, a glowing, warm, discerning, and expressive eye, a high and expansive forehead, a movement indicative of power and good breeding; and a presence that by its elevation, frankness, and fearlessness, would vitalize an assembly before he spoke a word. The streets, the churches, knew when he was in them, by the waves of grand impulse he kindled through his unconscious motions and look. As was said by one of his friends, "the cars were illuminated when he entered them." He was not self-conserving; he sought not his own preferment; he had to be frank by the regal type of his nature; he never assumed a posture or a tone; his manners were the undulation of his morals, and so identical with them, that, as with the old Romans, but one word, *mores*, was necessary to express both. His manners were the true exponent of his heart. And

if occasionally too brusque, and sometimes arrogant, when the cerebral excitement to which he was liable was upon him, they could not hide the repentance which promptly overwhelmed him, when he knew that he had wounded the feelings of any one.

The great organ of his nature was his heart. And this, like the ocean or the sun, was constantly distributing itself. Were not his sympathies so large and so freely given as to eclipse entirely his charities, his pecuniary gifts would have seemed worth mentioning. Ask the poor of Albany, — those, for whose relief he requested a number of gentlemen to meet him when his own funds were exhausted. Ask the church at Detroit, to which he gave so largely. Ask the persons from Maryland, for whom he collected thousands of dollars, and gave much himself, to manumit their slaves. Ask the boy that went with him at night in the winter months carrying blankets in the sleigh, when, as in his glee, he described it, he "hit twenty-seven;" that is, relieved that number of cases of suffering, in one evening's *détour*. Ask the family of the sick soldier from the neighborhood of Ogdensburg, whom Mr. James accompanied from the hospital in Albany to his home, that the invalid might see his wife and children before he died, supplying his every want and those of the inmates of his lowly habitation. Ask the numerous clergymen whom he furnished with Olshausen's Commentary, and other valuable books, that they might

share his joy in their contents! And let them record their testimony.

These instances may seem meagre compared with those which others were constantly witnessing. But are they not sufficient to make it apparent, that, but for the private channels in which it flowed, Mr. James would have been (perhaps he is) as widely known for his generosity as for his unique organization? The feeling with which he gave, was worth so much in itself, and for what it revealed, that the perishable tokens of it sank out of sight. And what shall we say of his friendships? They were formed in later years somewhat with reference to the capacity or need, as he thought, in the subject of them, for spiritual relief and advancement. Was it a soul dark for the want of an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, and not repellant or unintelligent in other respects, he could not withdraw his affection from it, or his labors. It was on one of the high hills of Berkshire County, under the shadows of the forests, that he stood for a long time talking with a young man on his favorite, almost his only, theme, the way of salvation; until at last, finding his words not understood or not appreciated, he threw his arms around him, and, holding him close to his breast, exclaimed, with great intensity of emotion, and in deep and troubled murmurs, repeating the phrase, "You want doctrine." In this mind, his interest never abated through the changes and separations of life; it seemed as if it could never

die. After many years, when writing to him, he said: "The affairs of all Europe are hardly of as much moment to me as those of your individual person. Let us keep marching, and keep fighting. If I get first to the heights of victory (eternal), what a long arm I shall stretch to pull you up to me."

How many, if they should read this, would say, My heart and welfare he thus sought and thus loved.

I need not say that his more intimate friendships were permanent. They could not change or abate. The fibre of them was eternal; the place for their exercise chiefly beyond the grave. And yet, with all this, he had a great natural heart, with the promptings in it which specially warm and dignify and adorn mankind. In not a few, the memory of him, in this respect, is like the refrain of some great anthem, which increases as it comes back in echoes from the scenes amidst which its notes were struck, and often after the hand which gave them is taken away.

It was in the latter part of the summer of 1867, that a painful and, at last, fatal disorder began to prostrate his powers. He thought that God was calling him; and He was. His physicians could not give him a great deal of hope. Nor did he need the expectation of remaining here to comfort him. He had so often thought of the land beyond the river, that its outline was very familiar to his imagination. Early in November, he wrote in lead pencil, "Since my last to you, I have been gradually sinking; and it is evidently

the impression of those around me, as it has long been my own, that there is no exit from my complicated malady but through the gate of death. There is hardly a square inch of my body, below the small of my back, which is not the seat of pain. I do not take the sofa, of late, nearly as much as formerly, and can read nothing of any account. But never was there a person as low as I am, surrounded with more outward comforts: the best of nursing; the warmest sympathy of friends; delightful letters of affection, particularly from ministers who have been informed of my extremity. But infinitely better still, all is sunshine within. The tree is leafless, but the warm sun of Eternal Love is shining around me, and the two worlds seem to open into each other. I wish I had strength to tell you fully the ground of my peace. For six months or more before this trouble came upon me, I enjoyed a higher degree of communion with God than ever before. To be like Him, to have the cursed root of sin eradicated, I offered myself up in daily sacrifice; willing to suffer every thing (for I saw plainly that it was only by suffering the end could be effected). But, with the first clear and real view of approaching judgment, all my evidences were of no more account than the drift-wood on which the drowning mariner tries to rest amidst the surges of the ocean. I never really knew before what sin was, nor what my own character was. I saw myself to be the basest of mankind; 'of whom I am chief' became as easy as the alphabet.

"Still I felt as a child; quite as anxious that the Father, whom I had so injured, should be glorified, as that I should be delivered from His wrath; and now I fully appreciate, as I had always pretty well understood, the meaning of Christ's death. God glorified, and my soul certainly saved, by Christ's simply dying for me; without any reference to my own character, dying for my sins, — a sense of which alone is necessary to get all the benefits of His death. I do not wonder that the only song in the upper world is, 'To Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; to Him,' &c. Soon shall I join in that eternal song.

"No young girl ever felt a more delightful fluttering in the prospect of a European tour, than I feel in the prospect of soon seeing the land of never-withering flowers; and of seeing Christ, and knowing Him, and being known of Him. If any thing favorable occurs, you shall hear; if nothing, then farewell 'till we meet on the bank of the River of Life.'

"In death, as in life, yours, W. J."

Soon after this, he wrote, "In the hour of my deepest distress, God has been nearest to me. I have been full of spiritual comfort, even when racked with pain; and all, or the greater part of it, founded not on any supposed filial relation to God, but on the sudden overwhelming expansion of the idea that Christ died. He put His sacred body between the sinner and the curse,

so that the severer the trial, the greater and surer the blessing to any one who just believes that simple fact. I rest in the sweet will of God."

On Saturday night, the 15th of February, 1868, he entered into his rest. Though his sickness had been long, and his sufferings severe, his joy was deep and full. "It is all joy, joy, joy!" were among his last conscious words. Three days before he departed, he said, "My faith is perfect. As I have not produced it, I may speak of it thus: It is like the sun, or, rather," he continued, "it is like the natural sense we have of the sunlight, — quite adequate to reveal the things it is designed to reveal." At another time, when his departure seemed full in view, he said, "The other side is sunny. I call it sunny, because I see only God in the unclouded heavens." — "I expect neither surprise nor disappointment in the future. Whatever may be in it, I know that the same God is there whom I have known here, and I trust Him." — "My mind is all ready for a shout at the vision of the exceeding glory." — "Nothing is so precious to me as that Christ died for us; I hear a voice saying, 'These are they which have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'" With such words as these, spontaneously uttered, he was frequently refreshing those who were permitted to watch the shadows departing, while his soul entered more clearly into the dawning and into the day.

The last words dictated by him for his daughter, about a week before his death, were these: —

"I could neither expect nor desire more outward comfort than I have; but oh, my dear child, this is a small matter in comparison with the trust in my Heavenly Father, which flows on in a constant stream, no more to be shaken or changed than one's faith in the declarations of a Father's love. God's word, revealing His full character to me, is the fountain at which I quench my perpetual thirst for the knowledge of His love to me. I find this fountain not only free as water, but as satisfying as water itself!"

Thus he that, in his early days, and in his maturer manhood, "thirsted" for holiness, came to the fountain of the River of Life, and to the paradise of God, where they thirst no more.

"*O si sit anima mea cum te.*"

LETTERS.

LETTERS.

I.

"ALBANY, June 22, 1860.

"MY DEAR ——. If I remember aright, the last words of my last letter were, that I would now proceed to remove your difficulties in appropriating and realizing the great promise of Christ's dwelling in you by His Spirit. These difficulties are all concentrated in a legal construction of gospel requirements. You cannot read, for example, such a passage as John xiv. 21–23, without getting the impression that the promise there given is conditioned upon something to be done which is distinct from, and subsequent to, believing; viz., upon loving Christ, and manifesting our love by keeping His commandments.

"It must not be questioned, that the design of our Saviour in these words was to excite His disciples in all ages to spiritual activity. This was the design of all His words, as it was of the words of the Apostles afterwards. But there are two classes of motives by which the activity of the soul may be stimulated, which are just the antipodes of each other; viz., the

certainty of the object sought and its uncertainty, — its certainty arising from the infallibility of the Saviour's love; its uncertainty arising from the fallibility of ours. To Christians, in so far as they are under the law, which they should not be at all, it cannot but appear to be the design of our Saviour in this passage to stimulate His disciples to greater watchfulness and diligence, that they may thereby insure their participation in the higher blessings of grace, and then they cannot but rest in the fidelity of their own efforts as the essential condition of their attainments. But before they can be conscious of any progress, their spiritual activity must cease to be damped by any such uncertainty. In resting upon Christ alone as their law-fulfiller, they must see that they are virtually obeying the whole commandment of the Gospel; for in no other way can love be generated. Hence, in the phraseology of the disciple of love, of the Gospel of John, believing, loving, and obeying mean, as nearly as possible, the same thing; the first being the living root, the others in due season the certain fruit. Nothing is so necessary, I am persuaded, for the removal of your chief difficulties as your perfect settlement upon this principle, — that faith is so peculiarly the condition of gospel holiness, that the attainment of the latter is certain, only provided that you avoid conditioning it on any thing else; and for the support of this principle, I can do nothing more pertinent than to give you my own exposition of the passage referred to,

John xiv. 20–24, showing definitively to whom those promises are made, and how, or in what way, they are actually fulfilled.

"Preliminarily, however, to such an exposition, I must ask your attention to a few words on the occasion and design of our Lord's last address to his disciples, in the midst of which this passage occurs; for there is no so common cause of our partial understanding of the Scriptures as our habit of dwelling upon single verses, and, as it often happens, upon single words, without sufficiently considering the occasion on which they were spoken, and the spirit in which they were uttered.

"Observe then, first, that the special design of all this portion of the Scriptures, from chap. xiii. to chap. xvii., inclusive, was (in connection with giving instruction) pre-eminently to strengthen the weak and the dejected. The idea that our Lord had it in His mind on such an occasion to lay down tests or conditions which should throw the slightest uncertainty on the future prospects of those whom He addressed, is so incongruous with the sympathetic movements of His soul, as evinced in the whole address, that it refutes itself. Who were the persons, what was their quality, from whom He could not separate until He had made them as certain as He then could make them of the glory which should succeed their temporary darkness? Upon the first trial all forsook Him, and one of them, who was thought to love Him most, with oaths and curses

denied Him. Can you conceive, then, that He should have made the glory which He was promising them conditional upon a character which they had yet to attain, and which, possibly, they might never reach? How entirely would such a conception, had there been any foundation for it in their minds, have withered all the consolation of the address, and frustrated its chief design!

"Bear in mind, secondly, that up to, and at this very time, the eleven whom He addressed were still possessed with the common Jewish notion, that the Messiah's kingdom was to be a world-wide theocracy, a manifestation to the nations, and not otherwise to the individual soul. They had as yet but the faintest idea of the nature of His kingdom as inward and spiritual. The three several inquiries of Thomas, Philip, and Judas, not Iscariot, arose out of their bewilderment upon this subject. Hence the great design of our Saviour in this 14th chapter (the whole of which is an answer to their inquiries), is, after comforting their human personal feelings, or in connection with that, to initiate them into the elementary principles of spiritual Christianity, and through them to initiate us and all mankind; for elementary as these principles are, and common as they have become to us through a Christian education, they transcend all the knowledge of natural reason. The love with which He had inspired them was such, that His intimation of being about to leave them had filled them with consterna-

tion, while it unsettled all their theories of the nature of His coming kingdom. How they might still communicate with Him after His departure, and how He intended to carry on the work, which, in passing from the earth, He left unfinished, were the questions in which they were vitally absorbed; and these are the subjects in which our Saviour aims to instruct them. In the verses we are explaining, His design is to show them how He could manifest Himself to them and not unto the world; how He could come to them and abide with them, without that visible or bodily glorification before the world, with which all their ideas of manifestation had been associated.

"His telling them that He was going to his Father, and that, too, through the common gate of mortality, seemed to leave them as dependent on the absolute God as they had been before His coming, and subject, of course, to all that uncertainty as to their future destiny which this idea must ever awaken in the human conscience. How natural the language of Philip, 'Show us the Father; give us some manifestation by which we may know, without any perplexity hereafter, how He is affected towards us'! How complete the reply: 'I am that manifestation; for all vital purposes, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; though personally distinct, we are yet so united in character, affection, and purpose, that as I have done nothing hitherto in your behalf, except as directed by Him, you may be certain that He will do nothing

hereafter apart from me. As He is so much the object of my love that I could not have come to earth but by His order, I, on the other hand, am so much the object of His love, that after my departure you may depend on His doing whatever I request for you: and though you have derived so much instruction, strength, and comfort from my personal presence and teachings, these are but a pledge of something far higher, which my Father, at my request, will do for you after I have ascended; for in my name, — that is, at my instigation, — He will send you another Comforter, who will abide with you for ever. Not to the world, observe, for the world, as such, cannot receive Him, having no susceptibility for His communications, which relate altogether to me; and what interest has the world in me? Therefore, "it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him, but ye know Him" (*i.e.*, speaking by anticipation, shall know Him); for your interest in me is such that you cannot fail to receive the messenger whom I send, and through whom my Father and I will hereafter for ever manifest ourselves to you. I cannot be manifested to the world as you have been expecting, because the nature of the Spirit's manifestations of me is such that the world has no interest in them. The world loveth me not, and no prospect of communion with me could induce it to forsake any of its unspiritual ways, or to keep any of those sayings or commandments with which such communion is necessarily connected. But in you who truly love me,

whose deepest concern is to abide in my love, and to keep those sayings of mine by which your love shall be manifested, in you the Spirit, which represents both me and my Father, shall take up his abode. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you."'

"Such, beyond a question, is the true meaning of these verses, or the spirit of them, rather, for their more precise meaning I purpose hereafter to unfold. Their immediate design is to show the disciples why it is and how it is, that, while the world shall see Him no more, His presence with them shall be perpetual. Whilst there shall be no such manifestation to the eye of the world as they have been expecting, there shall be a manifestation to them which shall keep up their personal relations with Him — the great point of their present anxiety — for ever. The promise is not conditional, but absolute; for, though made to a particular class of persons, the quality in them which insures its fulfilment, which is not their merit, but simply their moral susceptibility, or their capacity to be affected by promises like these, is assumed. The promise is to those of every age of time, who, with an abiding consciousness of sin, have, at the same time, such a desire for purity or fellowship with God, that a being like Christ, who, blending in His Divine humanity the sacredness of the skies with the sympathies of clay, descends from heaven only to conduct them thither, cannot fail to be the object of their supreme affection, as

His sayings and commandments must be the matter of their most earnest meditation.

"Having given you this general view of the occasion and design of the passage, the settlement of the two points already stated will fulfil the purpose of my letter. Who are the persons to whom the promise is made; and how, in their case, is the promise fulfilled?

"It is made to those who love Christ, and keep His commandments. What is meant by loving Christ? We love those who love us; we love them in proportion to the sacrifices they make for us, and we love them inexpressibly, when they are so much our superiors, that we cannot tell why they should love us at all. Can you not affirm that you thus love the Saviour? Can you not say with Peter, 'Thou who knowest all things, knowest that I love Thee.' Answer directly from your consciousness, as Peter did, in view simply of the report which the gospel brings of the person of Christ and His love to you, and without respect to any doctrines about what love to Christ should be, in which you may have been educated. You have had the idea that the fellowship which Christ offers you is burthened with difficult conditions. But suppose you could be persuaded that this was an entire misconception; that the primary requirement of the gospel is not that you should love Him, but that you should repose with unchanging confidence on the assurance of His love to you, — no love or service being desired or expected of you but such as this faith will secure

according to its strength spontaneously generated, the real demand being for faith, and for faith alone, faith in His love under all possible conditions: do you not believe, that if this view — which, you must perceive, contains the quintessence of the gospel, instead of being a theory merely — were to become a vital reality, — which it will become exactly in proportion as you act upon it, — that you would soon be able to answer with Peter, 'Thou knowest that I love Thee'? The love, then, is there; the only or principal obstruction to its development and consciousness being, that its object has never been adequately or clearly conceived. Tell me, farther, are you not conscious that your deepest want is not of affection simply, but of affection combined with purity, — the love of a higher nature, but of a nature which in loving will purify and exalt you. It is not peace simply that you seek, but peace unto purification. By a necessity which no power of will can change, your affections (I speak of their natural state) — made, as you cannot but know, to find their happiness in a conscious alliance with the All-True, the All-Good, and the All-Fair — are not reduced to the alternative of for ever pursuing an illusion, or at once yielding to despair. Here is the whole of your trouble: your heart, made distrustful by sin of the only Being whose love can satisfy you, is ever tempted to seek a substitute for His affections in visions of earthly bliss, which, however warmly you pursue, you know you can never embrace. Were it but possible that the higher

nature, without any degradation to itself, could embrace you just as you are, and hold you in its embrace till you were completely purified! Oh, could the All-Good and the All-Fair but give you the assurance that He would descend to you in your unhappy state, and love you with a love that should never change; could He give you the assurance that He had begun to deliver you from the bondage of corruption; that you were encircled by the arms of His love and wisdom, — of which the one should direct, and the other support you, through all the trials of your pilgrimage path, — till sin and sorrow shall be totally merged in the everlasting brightness of the heavenly horizon; and not content with a verbal assurance of this by the mouth of a messenger, should He come Himself in the likeness of your own sinful flesh, and first removing that greatest hindrance to an entrance into the Holiest, which arises from an ever-accusing conscience, make His own soul an expiatory offering for all your sin, past and future, in this respect, by that one offering 'perfecting you for ever' (Heb. x. 14); and then, before returning to His Father and your Father, to His heaven and your heaven, should He, though His soul is exceeding sorrowful in prospect of the sufferings before Him, as the burthen of His last address to you, to guard you in every conceivable way against future discouragement, saying, 'Let not your heart be troubled; for though I am going away, it is to receive the reward of my sufferings, — a reward of which, in due season,

you shall be a partaker with me; I go to fulfil an office for you in my state of glory, without which my sufferings for you would be to no purpose; I go to prepare a place for you in my Father's house, from which I will soon return and take you to myself; that where I am there you may be also, never more to be separated; and, meanwhile, our separation shall be only outward; I will not leave you comfortless; in a way of which you shall soon have an experience, I will manifest myself to you; I cannot, indeed, promise you an exemption from worldly trials; and that you may not be offended when they come, I feel it necessary to impress it upon you that from such trials, and manifold too, there can be no discharge. *Only* be of good cheer: all power is committed to me in heaven and on earth; the world of nature and the world of spirits are so entirely under my control that nothing can befall you but with my co-operation; and be assured that no trial shall be permitted but that (with faith in me) may be easily borne, and shall issue in a deeper and abiding peace;' — tell me would not this be a true — is it not the *only true* — presentation of Christ, of his character and his relations to our fallen humanity? And, as thus presented, have you a moment's hesitation in saying, 'Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee'? 'Ah,' but you say, 'the great proof of love to Christ is, that we keep his commandments, and herein I am conscious of a signal deficiency: I have no evidence of this sort upon which I can rely for a

moment.' And do you really suppose that Peter's answer to the question, Lovest thou me, which you cannot doubt was a true one, and most acceptable to his Master, was founded upon the proofs which he had given of it (a singular test for him); that it was the result of a particular self-examination, of the discovery of some tolerable conformity between his life and his obligations? Is it not obvious, upon the slightest reflection, that it was simply a burst of feeling quickened by a sense of his miserable failures and the amazingly manifested love of such a superior Being, to one wholly unworthy? 'Ah,' but you say, 'there was at least repentance.' Well, if you would conceive of Christ as being always to you just what He was to Peter, always your friend, and peculiarly so when conscious of having fallen (your ordinary state perhaps), would there not be the same power of repentance always in you, and therefore always the same ready response, 'Thou knowest that I love Thee'?

"Depend upon it that this susceptibility to the claims of Christ upon our supreme affection — though painfully conscious as yet of the power of rival affections, of which we would fain be delivered — is the kernel of the whole matter, the germ of a perfect sanctification. If you have but this, though you have nothing beyond it, you are the person to whom the promise is made. The fulness of the love of God is first manifested to us, attracts and moves us, in the personality of the Son of man, so worthy of supreme love.

Love in us is, at bottom, that response of the heart to which we are moved by a sense of the adaptation of such condescension to our helpless necessities. The 'keeping' of the commandments, to which the promise is made, is primarily that posture of believing-loving, or loving-believing attention and regard to His words, which is produced by the dependence of our hearts upon Him. It is the sighing to be more conformed to Him. It is that repenting, coming, praying, hoping, believing, waiting, which His promises have inspired, and which is all that we can do in our present weakness. These are pre-eminently and first of all His commandments. The *desire* to 'keep' avails, in the sight of grace, as if it were the full performance. For such as would fain love and keep, in the fullest sense, but cannot for the want of farther strength, the great manifestation is just as certain as that the splendors of day shall succeed the dimness of earliest dawn. Theirs is the blessedness of that hunger which shall certainly be filled; of those beginnings of purity, though at present mainly indicated by a sense of the contrary, which shall soon be perfected by the full vision of God.

"They have only to avoid the error, so fatal to peace and progress, of conceiving the love of Christ as conditioned on theirs, and of His promises as being other than absolute. If that fountain which has been opened in their hearts by thus 'seeing the Son, and believing on Him,' can be kept open, — kept living, though its streams at present scarcely flow, being obstructed by

so many obstacles, — a manifestation awaits them, than which there is nothing higher or greater for man. 'At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you.'

"What is meant by this promise, and how it is actually fulfilled, shall be the subject (the Spirit helping) of a future letter.

"And now, my child, 'for whom I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you,' let your mind be fixed on this single point, that the love of Christ to you, not yours to Him in the slightest degree, must be your whole dependence. Study yourself if you please, for you cannot well help it, but only for the purpose of taking a larger and firmer grasp of the hand of your Lord. To keep your mind properly occupied, which is a great matter, I send you the best expositor of the Gospel of John, for its size, in any language; much better for you than Stier's, which I had designed to send; though, I am happy to say, they are entirely harmonious with each other. You will find no difficulty in reading it, as the Greek is generally translated. Both in the kind and amount of help which the reading of Olshausen may bring you, you may be a little disappointed; but, here and there, there are thoughts which may live in you for ever. The longer you keep the book, the better I shall be pleased; and, if there should be a demand for the other volumes of his commentary, I shall be greatly delighted. For myself, I have always another copy on hand.

"Remember, farther, that the issue of your thus depending entirely on Christ's love to you, will be the deepening and strengthening of your love to Him. What you really want, is His love of complacency, not alone His love of conpassion; not merely 'you in Him,' which is equivalent to a sense of justification, but, above all, 'Him in you,' which is equivalent to sanctification. And this is what He has promised as the end of your keeping His sayings or commandments, of which the great characteristic, as distinguished from those of a strictly legal character, is this: that the latter, as Olshausen says, in page 558 of the volume I send you, are naked injunctions; the others contain in themselves the power for their own performance. If Christ commands, He gives, in the command itself, the power of fulfilling it. Thus He commands us to love. Love is the essence and end of all His commands; but it is that love of which faith (faith in *His* love) is the root. The whole commandment, then, is not love alone, but faith also, which gives the power to love. If love is the fruit, faith is the root. If love is the end of the commandment, as Paul says, 1 Tim. i. 5, faith is its beginning; not, observe, in the order of time, but in the order of nature: there is always just as much love as there is faith. But as faith grows into a habit of depending, leaning upon Christ's bosom and finding His succor in your trials, love will grow in the same ratio, until, at length, not only will the easier

sayings of Christ be fulfilled, but there will be a growing consciousness of entire self-sacrifice, and with that there will come a growing consciousness of the Divine complacency, — the highest goal of human aspirations."

II.

"ALBANY, Dec. 25, 1867.

"MY DEAR ——. On Sunday, the 9th, I gave up truly and perfectly all my hope for earth. The old symptoms of disease came back upon me with such power, that there was no resisting the conviction that the premonitory tokens of the great change were upon me.

"Since God uses instruments to accomplish His gracious purposes, I write now with the strong hope that He will once more employ my humble instrumentality to still further strengthen your faith, and revive the spirit of the contrite one. I have a doctrine to proclaim to you, which you know, which we have both known, which, more than any other, lies at the foundation of all true Christian experience, but which has been brought home to me, recently, with a power of which I never had any experience before.

"It is only for the sake of setting the doctrine in the clearest light, that I must ask you to let me give you an outline of my spiritual history for some time past. In a weak, a dreadfully weak, manner, I have been always contending with the selfishness of my

heart, never conquering, but never yielding; that is, never giving up the hope of a conquest at last. To come down to the last six months (though what I say of this period has been true, in a great degree, for a much longer time), my sense of the hatefulness of this moral leprosy, and yet of my helplessness to get rid of it, has been so acute, that I have rejoiced in suffering which would give a deliverance from this deep-rooted malady. Some occurrences in Providence, of a very small kind in themselves, were the occasion of opening my eyes to a more humiliating view of my character and life, than I had ever had, and, at the same time, awakening the profoundest grief and repentance. I was not rebellious, but gave my cheek to the smiter. Together with the repentance, I had what I may say was the first clear, unclouded, unmixed view of the character and relation to me of God, as a Father, that I ever had in my life; the first really natural view, every other view being a compromise of the simple declaration of the Scriptures with the reasonings and results of speculative theology. From that time until my great trouble came upon me, I was rejoicing in God as pure love, — as full of love as the sun is of light. During that time, I wrote on the subject, and preached, as all testify, as I never did before. But there was one subject on which I was yet dark and felt my darkness, and prayed continually that it might be removed; that was the exact relation of the atonement to the reconciliation which seemed

so perfect. I had, as I have always had, the common dogmatic views which are held by the Church on this subject. But those views had never had any such effect upon my heart as the simple view of the love of God now had. About this I was troubled: I could not doubt, somehow, that the late speculations on the subject of the atonement were wrong. I could not reconcile them with the Scriptures, and yet all my experience, as well as my reflection, was pushing me in that direction. I never could settle in those views, and yet I knew not how to escape them. I prayed continually that God, by His Spirit, would make this matter plain to me. This was my state of mind when I went to New York for medical advice.

"But about my bodily malady while there, I had very little concern. Another concern, infinitely more terrible, took possession of me in the hours of my deep retirement. As by a flash of lightning from the judgment-seat, I was at once prostrated by a clear apprehension of sin. My whole spiritual fabric, which I have all my life been building, — and which just before had seemed so beautifully illuminated by the love of God, — fell into a shapeless ruin. Conscience was stirred to its lowest depths. The one sin which first attracted my attention, hardly even seriously thought of before, but now made so clear, was merely the entering wedge; my whole heart was laid open, and it seemed to be nothing but a nest of vipers; my whole life seemed nothing but one tissue of corruption. I saw all the good there

was about it as clearly as ever; my perpetual struggle with evil, the many manifestations I have had of God's favor, my successes over particular temptations, — all these stood in my mind just as they had stood before. But I saw that all these were very superficial and comparatively external, as evidences of a justified or sanctified state. They were overshadowed by one vast sin, which filled my whole vision, and overwhelmed me with shame and humiliation. How shall I give you an idea of the nature of the sin? It may be expressed in a single word, — unbelief, or the non-appreciation of Christ. At once I saw, almost as by a new sense (though it was simply the old sense intensely acuminated), the man Christ Jesus, — the sent-of-God to save a sinful, self-destroyed race. No vision of the senses could be more real, or hardly more distinct; it was just as impressive as if He had come to save me alone. I saw Him in all His searching pureness, and in all His inexpressible love; the gift of the Father (like the sun in the heavens) to illuminate a dark world; the Light of man to point out, by His example eminently, and by His precepts, what man may be and ought to be; and with this, the Friend of man, nearer than any brother, full of love to him, and with all power to help him, — a love which carried Him to a death of ignominy, from which He was raised, by the power of the Father, still in His exalted state, to be the friend and brother of man, — to be not merely present to him outwardly, but by His Spirit to be *in* him; a

union not moral merely, depending on man's good behavior, — however that might affect the sense of it, — but spiritual and everlasting, depending on His mysterious love. This is the gospel, in the light of which I have been walking all my life; and how has my life corresponded to it? What influence has it had upon my character? Such has been His devotion to me, what has been mine to Him? If I had had a real faith in this *Man*, — this gift of the Father's love, and Himself the Father's love, in its liveliest possible exemplification, how could it have been that my whole life, in all its inward breathings and outward expressions, would have been any thing else but one continuous act of love and devotion to Him? How I should have felt Him ever with me, before me as my guide, within me as my comforter, behind me as the rock of my support, enabling me to look down with simple pity upon the world, whose vain opinion I have so much courted, and to avoid whose censure I have so constantly refrained from every thing like a bold, aggressive profession! How plain it became to me that I had never really or thoroughly believed on Him! This is what I mean by sin: not accepting this light of the world, and constantly walking in it, just as I accept and walk in the light of the noonday sun. 'Of sin, because they believe not in me;' believing in Him, or rather in certain doctrines about Him, only with the view of preserving peace of conscience, but not giving my whole heart and every action of my life to Him. I

now saw clearly what is meant by a personal union with Christ, by a being in Him, as the branch is in the vine; and I was as clearly conscious that this had never been the nature of my union with Him, for that had been compulsory, an external thing. In view of all this, I found myself a sinner; and a sinner, considering my peculiar advantages, of the most aggravated character. My condemnation was certain; all past experiences I utterly renounced. I did not want to be saved in virtue of any such miserable stuff. I wanted a real salvation, — a salvation direct from God, in perfect harmony with His perfections, given not merely because I was a miserable perishing creature, the proper object of compassion (though I made much use of this plea), but because he could give it justly and holily, without a shadow of loss to His own honor. And, observe farther, the salvation I wanted was simply forgiveness; nothing else had any sort of congruity with my case. The sword of offended Justice was impending over me. Regeneration could not save me, even if it were possible to have it. I felt that I had repentance, and that was a great comfort to me; though still, as I apprehended my sin, I could not build any confidence upon my repentance. I wanted forgiveness, not merely deliverance from wrath, but some sign of the love of the Father and the grace of the Saviour, whom I had so deeply offended, and whose frown was eternal sorrow, grief without remedy. God appeared to me not at all as an angry despot,

but as a most loving Father; and Christ as my loving Saviour. The dread which was upon my spirit, was not of some mysterious penalty in another world, an infliction of evil, but of separation from the source of all love, — from the bosom of a Father, and particularly from that blessed Being who had given His life for man. The forgiveness, of which I felt such a need, implied the return of those affections to me; that was what I wanted, — that was salvation.

"The only particle of light that gave me any hope here was Christ's sacrificial suffering. Whether or not I should ever receive the benefit of the atonement, it was now just as clear as that Christ came into the world, that He came specially, eminently, above every other part of His mission, for the purpose of dying for sin, for the purpose of taking the sinner's place in the eye of the law and justice, so that the sinner could feel that there was no moral necessity for his punishment; and that God could be just, and yet forgive him boundlessly. I could no longer doubt that this is just what all those scriptural expressions, about Christ's dying for us, mean. I could not avoid seeing that if that is not the gospel, it would be no more suited to one in my condition, which is, at some time or other, the universal condition, than a code of morals. I knew that God was good, loving, merciful, &c.; but I just as well knew, and at present far more impressively, that He was just also. Of the possibility of forgiveness in a way of righteousness, then

I entertained not the slightest misgiving. It was all my comfort, while my own individual case was doubtful; but that was still doubtful. I saw that I was quite as properly a subject for justice as for mercy; that nothing could be more exactly righteous, than that I should be excepted, if any one, and there certainly are many, from the provisions of grace. Though the doctrine of Christ's sacrifice saved me from despair, I had not the faith which could assure me of a deliverance from the penalty, — the penalty of abusing grace. It seemed most righteous that grace so abused should vindicate itself in turning a deaf ear to my supplications. I saw plainly that Christ's work merely put it in God's power to save me, if He chose to do so; and that if I, so properly a subject for justice, were saved through the great sacrifice, it must be only of God's good pleasure. Though I dwelt then continually upon the Saviour's death, as the only thing that made salvation possible, I felt after all, that, as an individual, I depended on God's sovereign determination. Oh, how I bowed before His sovereignty! how I acknowledged from my heart His right to do as He pleased with me! how I humbled myself, and cut myself loose from every thing but His sovereign pleasure! But here came in for my relief all that I knew, and all that the Scriptures testify, of His nature, as inclined to mercy, as full of love, as not willing that any should perish, &c. Oh, the sweetness of those innumerable passages, which give this account of

Him. I preferred, therefore, lying in His sovereign hands, to putting in any plea or claim founded even on the great sacrifice. I rather asked that He would embolden me to make that claim; that, having given His Son to die for me, He would now, of the same free goodness, give His Spirit to inspire me with faith, and make the work of Christ effectual in me. Here is where I stand, or rather lie, at present.

"I have no dependence but upon God's forgiveness of my sin through the atonement. But my peace is without interruption. My sufferings increase, but so does the strength by which I am supported, which I am sure is exhaustless. 'Whom He loveth He chasteneth,' satisfies every doubt, and gives a kind of pleasure to the pain. I love to endure what His loving hand lays upon me. My sky seems more cloudless as I advance. The everlasting love illumines alike both worlds. In our Father's house are many mansions."

SERMONS.

I.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON.

"*The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son.*" — MATT. xxii. 2.

IN Oriental poetry, a specimen of which we have in the 45th Psalm, the union of a ruler with his subjects is sometimes treated as if it were a marriage union, the nation being the bride and the prince the bridegroom. Whatever might have been the origin of this conception, in the actual relations and intercourse of such parties there is generally but little correspondence with the figure. But in the Kingdom, the advent of which was announced by the Messiah, particularly in its final consummation, this conception shall be fully realized. It is no mere figure or fiction, that the King of heaven has made a marriage for his Son. What is the gospel but a Divine solicitation for the hand of humanity?

Every individual soul, which truly responds to this solicitation, becomes thereby a member of that

holy community which, in the winding-up of the affairs of Time, shall be presented to the universe as the bride, the Lamb's wife, the object of his chief affection and the partner of his royal honors. Then it is that the marriage shall be celebrated, for which the preaching of the gospel through all the intervening ages has been the grand preparation. Then, when the number of the elect shall be finished, when the redeemed from the earth out of every kindred and tribe and nation shall be fully gathered, then shall be heard in heaven the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters and of mighty thunderings, saying, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Bride hath made herself ready." In making ready the Bride, in preparing for this scene of unimaginable bliss, the gospel, as we have already intimated, is the great instrumentality. The gospel declares the terms of this union on the part of God, and furnishes the motive to their acceptance on the part of man. The subject, then, to which I shall ask your attention, is the instrumentality of the gospel in effecting a heart reconciliation between God and man. As reconciliation supposes a previous but broken union, to explain the nature of that union, the union originally ex-

isting between the soul and God shall be our first object.

The original relation of the soul to God was not the relation of a subject to a governor, nor of a servant to a master. It was not what we call a law relation, but wholly a love relation, the distinction between which consists in this, — that, in the latter, the first, last, and only aim of the Higher party is to promote the happiness of the object loved. In a law relation, on the contrary, His supreme and most manifest regard is to His own rights, honor, and authority. In a purely love relation, obedience is never sought to be secured by an exhibition of authority, exciting, in the inferior party, an apprehension of penalty. That was the curse which sin brought with it. The obedience of the soul was prompted purely by love, or by a sense of God's infinite affection. And in this consisted its original integrity: it was the reign of legitimate love. And that is what is meant by the kingdom of heaven, or the rule of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is not any visible social organization: it is the reign of purity; that is, of legitimate love in the individual soul. The force of the word "legitimate" will be better understood when we consider, secondly, the manner and circumstances of the fall.

To this purpose we observe, that, as the soul was made to find her happiness in loving, and her highest happiness in loving God, she was so made, also, in His wondrous beneficence, as to be capable of an inferior but yet a most heart-felt enjoyment in the communications of creatures. In giving Himself to her, God gave her, also, a magnificent endowment out of Himself.

"The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath He given to the children of men." — "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedest him with glory and honor; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Such was the condition of the soul on the day of its creation; endowed with a terrestrial paradise, — that is, with every means of worldly gratification, — and this was the occasion of its fall. You may wonder, indeed, how this gross, material world could tempt this son and heir of the Eternal; how the soul, born with the high capacity for union with the Divine, and actually standing in the Divine fellowship, could yield to so base a competitor. But consider how the temptation prevailed. Was it through the mere violence of natural desire, overbearing all regard to the commands of the Creator? Was the fall the effect of a bold, deliberate act of trans-

gression? Why, sin, even in our fallen state, does not begin in that way, though that is the end of it. It begins in this way: God is too good to inflict so great a penalty for so small a deviation. Can He consign me to death for desiring, only a little too eagerly, a gratification, for which the nature He has given me was evidently made? Can He mean that my life should be a bondage, —a perpetual struggle between inclination and duty? Rather let me believe that, in my simplicity, I have misunderstood the nature of the prohibition; and very certainly He does not mean that an action in itself of so little consequence should be followed by such evil results as those which I have apprehended. How, in fact, can I so well manifest my confidence in His goodness, my gratitude for the many prerogatives with which His royal munificence has endowed me; how so well my contentment with His authority, — as by shaking off the bondage of a fearful spirit, and indulging that desire for an earth-born happiness, which is a part of my nature, not according to any statute of limitations, but in the exercise of a free intelligence?

Let the catastrophe, in that case, be our warning. Yielding to the tempter, the presence of God immediately departed from the soul. Fallen

into a law relation, God has become the subject of her settled distrust. But still true to the original law of finding her happiness in loving, nothing remains now but for the soul to make the most of that which is offered, in a love relation, or, properly speaking, a lust relation, with that inferior and transitory good by which she was seduced from her pristine purity.

This is the condition of the soul at present. Once the joy of the Creator's bosom, and the image of His perfection, she is now led captive by the arts of the great seducer. Her affections, so ennobled originally by their conscious alliance with the All-Good and the All-Fair, and so happy in the prospect of an interminable bloom, are now reduced to the necessity of ever pursuing an illusion, — a known illusion, for the most part, — or at once yielding to despair. In a word, if we may credit the statements of inspiration, and be allowed to draw an illustration from some of its various imagery, the difference between the actual condition of the soul, and that in which it stood when it first came from the hand of its Creator, — or rather from His bosom, for are we not His offspring? — is just the difference between a perfectly filial youth, to whom his father might have said, "Son, thou art ever

with me, and all that I have is thine;" and that same youth, when, at another period of his history, he would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat; or, to go a degree lower, between the woman, crowned with the honors and exulting in the joys of the new-made bride, and the same woman lost to the glory and the peace of innocence.

The gospel is the instrumentality by which this condition is reversed; by which the whole evil of the fall is repaired; by which the power of a seducing world is entirely broken, and the soul reunited in its ancient bonds to her true husband.

And what is the gospel? When the new Jerusalem shall come down out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and it shall be asked, "Who are these that are arrayed in white robes, and whence come they?" the response shall be, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Though a multitude which no man can number, with one voice they ascribe the purity which fits them for the heavenly bridal, to the Lamb that was slain. In the symphony which bursts from the full communion of the blessed, "Worthy is

the Lamb that was slain," we have the answer to the question, What is the gospel? It is simply the doctrine of expiation and of sanctification by the blood of Jesus. To describe the inward process by which this doctrine restores the soul to purity and to heaven, shall be the object of our further remarks.

The first thing that is done on the part of God, in the execution of His gracious purpose, is to send a message to the soul, announcing that the breach is not past healing; that a reconciliation is possible, the first condition of which is, that she must forsake the world immediately, and return to her true husband. So sincere, so anxious, we may say, is His desire for the soul's return, that, not content with despatching a single message, He sends her line upon line, servant after servant, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return from your evil ways. Some of these servants, in fact, He has organized into a standing ministry, — well called a ministry of reconciliation, — whose whole business it is to wait upon the soul through all the period of her probation, to argue with her, endeavoring to convince her what a folly she has committed, what a delusion to make a God of this poor world; to remind her of the happy and honorable state from which she has fallen, and which

she may yet recover, — for they are directed always to conclude with the assurance that, notwithstanding all her folly and all her guilt, the door to a reunion is yet open, and will be until a certain hour: an hour, the date of which not being precisely fixed, the soul is at liberty to consider as either near or distant. But, to give the greater force to the language of entreaty, she is distinctly forewarned that there *is* an hour which fixes the limit of her Lord's forbearance, and of her probation, — an hour beyond which the world can no longer hold her, nor she the world, when at midnight a cry shall be heard, Behold, the bridegroom cometh! Of the manner in which this message is received by the many who are called, it is not our business, at present, to speak. Only to observe, in passing, that they make light of it, and go their ways, — one to his farm, another to his merchandise. For no great pleasure here upon the earth, — for the enjoyment of a landed estate, a property already attained, or in the hope of acquiring such a property by success in merchandise, — they despise the joy of an everlasting bridal, and the glory of an eternal crown. The man who, for such a dream as a title in heaven, would sacrifice, or even hazard, any worldly possession, whilst retaining ever so little capacity for holding and

enjoying it, by the general voice is pronounced a fool. He who, in his zeal for such a faith, dares to encounter the world's persecution, makes for himself the reputation of a fanatic. The general effect of the message upon the wanton soul is to increase her wantonness. The whole comfort which she takes from it, is that which is contained in the intimation that her lord delayeth his coming. How active is her fancy in stretching that period to its utmost conceivable limit! how exuberant in filling it with images of worldly bliss, with scenes which derive all their enchantment from the absence of her Lord, and want nothing to make it a perfect heaven but the assurance that He will never come to interrupt her pleasure! But of these it is not our business, at present, to speak.

It is of those whose better sensibilities have been awakened; of those in whom the doctrine of the message, corresponding with a soul-felt want, becomes an inward call which they cannot resist, which they would fain obey.

What is that want? It begins in a sense of the unsatisfying nature of worldly good; in a dim apprehension that the soul, in seeking it, is but wandering more and more from its highest sphere, and that substantial happiness can only be obtained by

turning back and seeking first, reconciliation with God. Under this conviction she turns back. But soon she meets an invincible difficulty in the law relation, under which she has fallen; a difficulty of which she has but little consciousness, while still blinded by the attractions of the world, and deceived by its fair promises. But let the world become dark, entirely dark; let that be fulfilled in the soul which is described by the prophets: "She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies,"—then shall she say, "I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now;" that is, her vital union with the world being broken, let her seek a similar union with the God she has forsaken, and in that law relation, which had hitherto been only a little irksome, by no means very painful or burthensome, she will find the root of all her misery.

This soul may have turned back a hundred times; and a hundred times, from not meeting the response which she expected, she has been forced to seek her happiness again in the embrace of the world. The cause of these disappointments has been her supposing that God still stood to her in

a law relation, — any other she was incapable of conceiving; that, God being angry with her for her worldly dalliances, she could win back His favor only by her strenuous repentances, by her legal efforts to obey His requirements. The result of all these efforts has been, that, receiving no sign of the Divine acceptance, no inward testimony that God is reconciled, her bondage to the world is as fixed as ever. Do what she may, there always remains a deep, unconquerable misgiving as to the heart of the offended party. The reason is obvious. The heart has departed from its rightful husband; and, if infidelity, even in human relations, is esteemed a crime of such a nature that a reparation can scarcely ever be made for it, what wanderer from God, however he may long to return or strive to return, can ever hope for the smallest expression of that heart-felt kindness which is only the blissful reward of purity?

We are now prepared to describe the process by which the gospel is effectual to this purpose. Great as the difficulties are which prevent the soul's return to God, arising from her inveterate worldliness, those which eternal morality interposed to prevent God's returning to her, were of a far more serious character. It is very conceivable

that a man might have so much love for a ruined wife, that he would die to recover her to happiness, who yet could not bear the thought of a reunion with her, for the reason, that such a measure, without exalting her, except in an outward way, would but degrade him to her own level. Such, according to the Christian scheme, was God's love to the sinning soul, that, in the person of His Son, He did die; but, in so doing, He not only gave an expression to His love, which is but one part of the meaning of the atonement, but He made it a moral thing, — moral on both sides, — that the law relation should be entirely buried, and the love relation immediately revived. This is the gospel. The doctrine which contains as in a seed the whole vitality of revealed religion, — the doctrine which distinguishes the gospel of God from every ethical system of rational or human origin, — is simply the doctrine of expiation by the blood of Jesus, — the doctrine of the death of the law relation which had existed between God and man, and of its reorganization between God and his co-equal Son, who, assuming humanity, has fulfilled all its responsibilities, both of suffering as an expiation for transgression, and of obedience as a title to unchanging respect and favor. That

gospel which meets the soul-felt want of universal humanity, which awakens all its hopes and inspires all its efforts, is contained essentially in this doctrine, — that sinners of mankind are justified, that is regarded and treated as righteous, are not merely delivered from condemnation, but receive a full legal title to glorification, not in virtue of their own personal righteousness, but in virtue of the righteousness of another, the whole benefit of which they obtain by simply trusting it. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," and obtains for him, through the satisfaction which has been rendered to the Lord by another, a full title, and what Adam had not in Paradise, a sure and indefeasible title to all the benefits which are due to a perfect legal or personal obedience.

I am far from saying, that it is under this full conception of the nature of the gospel, that the few who are chosen find their encouragement to begin the work of salvation. I have stated the truth in all its fulness, as it is affirmed in the Scriptures and confirmed by mature experience. But a spark of it is enough to light the lamp of hope in many a soul, and to initiate a preparation for meeting the Bridegroom.

Enough that the title to Heaven has been secured: it only remains to acquire the fitness for it. What is that fitness? What can it be but sanctification? We proceed to show that sanctification, alike with justification, — the fitness for Heaven as well as the title to it, — comes only through the blood of the Lamb. The first use of the term "sanctify" which occurs in the Scriptures, and which has reference to persons, is where it is commanded that the first-born of the Israelites in Egypt should be sanctified, separated from the service of their parents, and from all worldly employments, and consecrated to the peculiar service of Jehovah, — that is, sanctified. In process of time, this order was commuted; and in place of the first-born of the whole nation, one of its tribes, the tribe of Levi, was accepted as a substitute. The occasion and manner of that sanctification were this: God in judgment had resolved upon the destruction of all the first-born of the Egyptians. But, meaning to spare the first-born of the Israelites, who were mingled with the Egyptians, He directed that a lamb should be slain in every family, and that the blood of this lamb should be sprinkled with a bunch of hyssop on the lintel and door-posts of every Israelite's house, that when the angel of the Lord passed

through the land to smite the Egyptians, this sign might be a protection to those whom it was intended to spare. Those who were thus symbolically redeemed by blood, were ordered to be sanctified or to be considered holy unto the Lord.

Every one sees that this must have been the symbol of a higher redemption and a higher sanctification. The apostle Paul, referring to the whole Jewish ritual, of which this was but the beginning, and in which every thing was purified by blood, has this expression: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works (that is, from law works, works which have no life in them), to serve the living God;" from which, without any further citations (though the number of corroborating testimonies is unlimited), we gather this proposition, — that sanctification, like justification, is essentially the effect of faith in the great sacrifice.

The blood of Christ trusted in, has a twofold effect, — an effect upon the mind of God toward us, and an effect upon our minds toward Him. The effect of faith upon the mind of God toward

us, we call Justification, — its effect upon our minds toward Him, we call Sanctification.

Sanctification, then, under the New Testament, is that inward and voluntary devotion of a soul to God, to which it is naturally and necessarily prompted by the apprehension of God's love to a sinful world, — of which the atonement of Christ is both the expression and the justification. This love, self-appropriated (which is Faith), redeeming the soul from the curse of a law relation, breaks the power both of earth and hell, redeems it to the love and service of God. Just in so far as a soul is conscious of a deliverance from the curse of the law relation, through the intervention of that Sacrifice, it sanctifies itself, — consecrates itself to God.

Sanctification is thus the natural and necessary effect of a free justification ; growing out of it, just as the branches of a living vine grow out of their parent stock. From the very nature of our relations to God, a soul that has sinned cannot return, cannot put forth the first act of acceptable obedience until the power of a free justification has been felt in the conscience ; and *vice versa*, from the moment that that power begins to operate in the conscience, according to the strength of assurance which is thus imparted, the whole man is drawn back to holiness.

And now, let us test this principle by a direct application. Tell me, my friends, what is it which those hearts of yours, even though many of you are yet so young, have been seeking for long years, and are seeking still, and must seek for ever? Do you say, as with more or less qualification all of you will have to say, the love of creatures? But, if that be true, is it not made true mainly by the fact, that the offer of a higher fellowship has never been distinctly made to you, so distinctly that you could fully appropriate and entirely depend upon it? You have had the idea, perhaps, that the fellowship which God offers you in the gospel is burthened with conditions. But suppose you could be persuaded that this was an entire misconception; that the primary requirement of the gospel is not that you should love Him, but that you should repose, with unchanging confidence, on the assurance of His love to you: no love or service being desired or expected of you but such as this faith will spontaneously generate, the real demand being for faith, and for faith alone, — faith in His love under all possible conditions? Tell me, farther, are you not conscious that your deepest want is not of affection merely, but of affection combined with purity, — the love of a

higher nature, but of a nature which, in loving, will purify and exalt you? It is not peace simply that you seek, but peace and purification. By a necessity which no power of will can change, your heart — having been made distrustful by sin of the only Being whose love can satisfy you — is ever tempted to seek a substitute in visions of earthly bliss, which, however warmly you pursue, you know you can never embrace. Were it but possible that that higher nature, without any degradation to itself, could embrace you just as you are, and hold you in its embrace till you were completely purified! Oh, could the All-Good and the All-Fair but give you the assurance that He would descend to you in your unhappy state, and love you with a love that should never change! Not content with a verbal assurance of this by the mouth of a messenger, should He come Himself in the likeness of your own sinful flesh, and, first, to remove that greatest hindrance to an entrance into the Holiest, which arises from an ever-accusing conscience, should He make His own soul an expiatory offering for all your sin, past and future, in this respect, by that one offering perfecting you for ever, — tell me, I say, — if these views, which you must perceive contain the quintessence of the gospel, instead of being mere

theory, were to become a vital reality, which they will become, exactly in proportion as you act upon them, — could you refrain from saying, with the fallen Peter, "Thou, who knowest all things, knowest that I love Thee"? Depend upon it, that this susceptibility to the claims of Christ upon our supreme affection, which is always the consequence of a free justification, is the kernel of the whole matter. Sanctification is nothing else but the development of this germ, the perfecting of this love. And that is the end of our life-trial, — a trial upon which we have no time to dwell, but upon which, in passing, we must make this single remark, defining the difference between it and the trial of our original humanity; viz., that the trial of our original humanity was a trial for justification, — a trial for a title. In our case, on the contrary, this title is already secure. The title to justification and all its blessings, the title to a complete salvation, has been secured by the trials of Incarnate love. Our trial is merely the method which Divine wisdom has ordained for developing the principle of trust, the seed of sanctification, — a trial which continues through our whole life, and, therefore, it is said, "These are they which have come out of great tribulation." But of the nature of this

trial we have not time, at present, to speak. Let us conclude, then, with a view of its glorious issue. Blessed are they which shall enter into the marriage-supper of the Lamb!

And to get a proper conception of the scene which shall then be unfolded, we must again throw our thoughts back to the condition of the soul when it first came from the hand of its Creator; for its recovery to that state is substantially the issue of the whole experience. What are all the deeper troubles of the soul, what its profoundest prayers, but a sighing to recover the state into which it was originally born, and for which it was constitutionally made? The universal instinct teaches us that we were made for love. The great attraction of our fallen state is the love of the creature, and to this we cleave because we know of nothing that is better. But a Christian has risen to the idea that it is not in all creatures to give him this enjoyment, in such sufficiency and such purity as his nature requires. This can be found only in the love of God, — a love deep as the ocean, which cannot be exhausted, and pure as the heavens, which nothing can defile.

This was the happiness of the soul on the day of its creation.

But all this has been lost by her fall. By a gulf which apparently could never be passed, by a law which apparently could never be changed, the victim was separated from the joy of innocence. By the just judgment of heaven, the soul, originally divine, the joy of its Creator's bosom and the image of His perfection, seduced from her first allegiance, was abandoned to the power of her destroyer, until another Being — sometimes called the Son of God, because He is divine, and sometimes the Son of Man, because He appeared in our nature — came as her deliverer; by His voluntary sacrifice propitiating for her the powers of heaven, and by the infusion of His own Spirit gradually reproducing her original purity. But her present condition is one often of the deepest trial: as a poor widow, oppressed by her adversary; as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit; as a wife of youth, who has experienced the bitterest of human reverses, she is ever looking to heaven for consolation, and there she finds it in the assurance which the gospel gives her, in the deep assurance that her Maker is her husband, who though, for the trial of her constancy, often seeming to forget her during the small moment of her wanderings upon earth, will yet rejoice over her with a bridegroom's joy,

clothing her with the garments of salvation as the bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. New honors, unknown to primal innocence, await the soul which shall be found faithful at the last advent. Not only shall the past be no more remembered, not only shall there be a recovery of the peace and purity of paradise, but a voice from the Throne declares, Behold, I make all things new! A new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name; a new attire, not merely of bridal beauty, but of queenly splendor; an inheritance which can never be defiled, and a glory which can never fade, — these are the rewards of suffering obedience which shall be given when the Bridegroom cometh.

Let us then gird up the loins of our mind, and hope unto the end for the grace that shall be brought unto us at the final revelation, when the love and fidelity of our heavenly Bridegroom, about which we shall always be living in some jealousy here, shall be vindicated by the fulfilment of His dearest engagements; when the desire for us, which first brought Him from His royal abode, shall be fully satisfied by making us partakers of His royalty.

When, though we have been living here in

such comparative wretchedness, sighing generally under the sense of unworthiness and the fear of being forsaken, we shall find, to our eternal wonder, that, amidst all our woes and wanderings on earth, His love has never for a moment forgotten us; and that now, in the presence of the Ancient of Days, while thousands of thousands are ministering unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand are standing around Him, His chief delight is not in the praises of the seraphim, but in the joy of His mystic bride, as above earth's throes she stands in her white robe, and waves her ever-blooming palm.

II.

THE GUILT OF UNBELIEF.

"*He that believeth not shall be damned.*" — MARK xvi. 16.

FOR a reason which might be given, the word damnation, or any other word expressing the same idea, — the word hell, for example, — occurs very seldom in the preaching or writings of the apostles, but very frequently in the discourses of our Lord. It is generally true, that threatenings, even Divine threatenings, lose much of their force by frequent repetition. But coming from one who was not only inspired to utter, but commissioned to execute them, and from one of whom all that we know forbids the presumption that He could have any pleasure in being the messenger of wrath, — for He came not to condemn the world, but to save it, — coming from such a one, the frequency of their repetition detracts nothing from their solemnity.

And what a certainty it attaches to the doctrine of a future and a fearful retribution, that we have

it attested to us by such an authority; that, from lips so gracious, there should have fallen such an expression as the one contained in the text, and this but one of many to the same purpose.

Of the nature of this retribution it is not our purpose, at present, to speak. The object of our discourse is to explain the sin which provokes it, — the sin, rather, of which damnation is the necessary consequence. It appears, not only from the text, but from many other passages of our Lord's discourses, that damnation is the special penalty of unbelief; not of sin in general, or of sin in any other of its various forms, but of unbelief, simply and exclusively. It belongs to the pith of Christianity as first promulged by its Great Teacher, that only he who believeth not shall be damned.

What, then, is unbelief? and, particularly, whence arises its peculiar guilt? To answer this question shall be the object of our discourse. We shall consider, —

1st, What is unbelief, as distinguished from sin in general?

2d, What is its radical and universal cause?

3d, How is it actually developed?

First, then, what is unbelief as distinguished

from sin in general, and which makes it what sin in general is not, — inevitably damning? It will appear incidentally in the course of our remarks, that unbelief is sin in its strongest and most malignant expression; and, therefore, that it specially deserves damnation. And yet this is not the ground on which it actually incurs it.

No sinner shall ever be damned simply on account of the enormity of his guilt, for the provisions of the gospel are just as adequate to the pardon of the greatest as of the least offences. What makes unbelief, as distinguished from sin in general, inevitably fatal, is the position in which it puts the sinner with respect to the provisions of salvation, — a position in which they cannot reach him, and of course cannot save him. Whilst, therefore, men are condemned simply on the ground of unbelief, it is not, however, because unbelief is a sin above other sins, — though it is so, as we shall see, — but because by its very nature it is antagonistic to God's method of salvation.

Let me give an illustration which may show, in a popular though imperfect manner, the relation which unbelief bears to the final penalty. There was a rebellion going on for some years against the government of a country. How

often, while this contest was waging, did the government say to the rebels, "If you will only lay down your arms, and return to your duty as good subjects, you shall have all the rights again, — all the just rights which have been forfeited by rebellion"! But, instead of laying down their arms, they only cast contempt upon the offer; and you see, at once, that it was not their past rebellion, wicked as that may have been, but simply the manner in which they treated the overture, which made their restoration impossible. Not any spirit of vengeance on the part of the government, but their own madness and folly, made their destruction unavoidable.

Sin is rebellion against the government of heaven. The light of conscience in every individual of the race testifies that he is a party in this rebellion. But light has come into the world from another quarter; not from conscience, but direct from the throne, declaring God's purpose and method of salvation, — of which method the distinctive, and in fact the all-comprehensive, feature is expressed by the term "grace." So far as God's disposition is concerned, salvation from all the consequences of sin may be obtained without the slightest sacrifice from the party needing it. God Himself has provided the sacrifice which

enables Him to offer salvation freely. But what is the spirit with which men receive this offer? With one consent, they agree to treat it as if it were a fiction. They make light of it. This is what is meant by unbelief, very properly so called, because unbelief only can explain such conduct. It is inconceivable that men could thus treat an overture of mercy, if they really believed themselves the hell-deserving sinners which the overture assumes them to be. It is because they do not believe the first principle on which the overture rests, — viz., the atrocity of sin, an unbelief which, as we shall show hereafter, is just as wilful, and even more damnable, than the rebellion itself, — that they act, naturally enough, as if it were all a fiction; some spurning it as though it were utterly contemptible; others affecting a degree of moderation, merely neglecting it. But, in such a case, neglect is contempt. Mercy, not embraced with the whole heart, is mercy despised. And, however to our eye unbelief may appear to have various shades or degrees of malignity, not so to the eye of Him from whom the overture comes. It has cost Him too much to make it, to allow but one feeling in His mind, and that, a feeling of unmeasured indignation toward every soul of man which refuses to

embrace it. Eternal love, no less than eternal justice, will be avenged at last in the perdition, without remedy, of every soul upon which shall rest the guilt of unbelief, — a sin of more crimson dye in the sight of heaven than all the crimes denounced in the decalogue; and yet of so little account in the eye of the guilty party, that scarcely, in one of a thousand, every one of them red with the blood of the Son of God, is its criminality, much less its peculiar criminality, even a matter of suspicion.

But when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe; when every eye shall see Him, and they, also, which pierced Him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him, — then the guilt of unbelief shall be felt in the woe-stricken conscience to be all which the oracles of heaven had declared it; viz., the guilt of making God a liar, and of trampling under foot the blood of His Son.

We come now to the second question. Having shown what it is in unbelief that distinguishes it from sin in general, — the latter being simply a rebellion against the government of heaven, the other rebellion spurning reconciliation, — we inquire, secondly, what is its radical cause, — the cause which explains its universality and its power, its stupendous power over such a vast proportion of the race.

It will appear, hereafter, that unbelief, as to its nature, is a delusion of the understanding, but a wilful delusion, a chosen delusion. Yet no one ever chooses a delusion except under the pressure of some sad necessity, some extreme exigency. What that exigency is, which has occurred to fallen man in his relations with the government of heaven, — an exigency which is felt less or more by every individual to whom the overture comes, and which impels him to rush, for a momentary relief, into a wilful delusion, — that exigency I now propose to describe as the real and radical cause of all unbelief.

But, to do this with clearness, we must go a little further than we have yet done into the original controversy. Let us endeavor, then, to make a clear statement of the whole issue between the soul and God.

It is the doctrine of the Scriptures, that the carnal mind, or the mind previous to its spiritual renovation, is enmity against God. For a particular reason, "it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." From a principle rooted in the heart, every individual of the race is not, and until the ruling affection of his nature is changed cannot be, subject to the law of God. It being our object to make a clear statement of this tremendous issue, it may be well, in passing, to show what the issue is not; and I observe, first, that there is no hostility in the mind to God, as He is revealed in the laws of the natural universe. The goodness of these laws we never question. The sufferings which arise from an occasional anomaly in the manner of their working are so far outweighed and outnumbered by the blessings perpetually flowing from their regular operation, that no reasonable being ever thinks of the Author of Nature with any ambiguity of sentiment. For, although this natural constitution of ours is found to contain the seeds of pain, disease, and death, yet, when we distinguish between those pains and diseases which are purely natural, and which cannot be avoided, and those which are the effects of madness and folly, — between those evils which flow

directly from the laws of nature, and those which arise from the wicked abuse of these laws, — when, with this distinction in view, we consider how light and transient are all the pains of the present life, in comparison with the sum of its enjoyments; and then, as to death; when we reflect that there is nothing in this natural revelation which forbids the hope of a still happier existence hereafter, — no prospect of a future reckoning which should abate, in the least, our present satisfaction, with so much to enjoy and so little to apprehend; — we see what reason there is that the soul should rejoice in nature, and cleave to the Author of nature as the child cleaves to the breast of its mother. In fact, the love which is inspired for God, as He is presented in these revelations, is so general, and often so impassioned, that, under the direction of another principle, which is wholly evil, it tends, as much as any other cause, to conceal from the soul its real character and the real issue between itself and heaven.

Nor, secondly, in charging the soul with enmity against God, and especially against the law of God, is it meant that men in general are hostile to the moral law, as contained in the ten commandments.

There is nothing in these, in any or in the whole of them, which affronts the sensibilities of the race. All of them, on the contrary, are in such happy accordance with the interests of man as a social being, that although under special temptations they are often violated, yet none but the most stupid or hardened ever think of impugning their beneficence. They may be regarded in fact as the teachings of nature re-affirmed with a Divine sanction, and made the basis of the civil and social economy of the chosen nation of antiquity, from which they have been copied, not at all on account of their religious contents, but entirely because of their beneficent bearing upon the moral and social interests of the race, into the civil constitution of Christendom. And that these ten commandments are outwardly so generally regarded, and often so well regarded, under the instigation of self-love, is another of the causes which tend to disguise the real issue between the soul and its Maker.

What, then, is the law to which the carnal mind is not and, remaining carnal, cannot be subject? We must look for it in a wider view of the soul's relations to God, than is included within the limits of time and nature. It is the law of the moral universe, — a law which embraces not

man only, but the highest orders of creation. Whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, they can be subject to no higher responsibilities than those which result from a creation in the Divine likeness, — a dignity which belongs equally to man. For creatures made in the Divine image, what law can there be but the Divine example? The least that God can require of beings made like Himself is, that they should act like Himself; that they should be governed in all their actions by the same principle which forms the law of His own conduct, and peculiarly of His conduct toward them. The law of the Divine conduct is love, — eminently so with respect to the moral universe; and this is the law which binds every member of that universe, both in his relations to the rest, and to the Supreme Ruler. Our concern at present is with the requirements of this law upon man. Endowed with instincts just as strong as those of the lower creatures, though immeasurably finer and more complex, and, through these, with a capacity for self-enjoyment to which there is scarcely a limit, he is endowed also with a power of controlling these instincts, even self-love, the most radical of them, in the interests of a love which is universal. Thus a foun-

dation is laid for the virtue of Benevolence. Not from any expectation of reward, not from the belief that others will do in like manner to him (with good reason he may have the contrary belief), but hoping for nothing again, and in opposition to every instinct of his selfish nature, — to the love of property, to the love of pleasure, to the love of admiration, to the love of kindred, to the love of life, to the love of self in short, in all its manifold aspects,— a man may make himself an utter sacrifice for the benefit of his fellows, — not merely for the good, but even for the unthankful and the evil. Under the influence of Christianity, that sacrifice has been made to the full extent of this description, thousands of times, — if it should be called a sacrifice,— for it may be questioned whether the sense of duty which impels to it is any stronger than the sense of pleasure which accompanies it. And between them both, after it is all done, the man who has done it may say, without the slightest affectation, "I am but an unprofitable servant; for I have done only what it was my duty to do." Such is the compass of the moral capabilities of human nature, with reference only to the creature. And if a man may make so little account of the strongest instincts of his nature, if he may make self a perfect

sacrifice, simply from a sense of right or of duty; if he may do this in the interest of his fellow, his equal; if he may do it in behalf of the most worthless of his species; if he may do it in the interest of his enemy; in short, if he may do it in a case which presents no claim whatever, and no possibility of recompense, — of what an unmeasurable enlargement must this sentiment be susceptible, when the object of it is the Infinite God, the personal embodiment of absolute Perfection!

This is the compass of man's moral capabilities with respect to his Creator; and this is what Heaven demands in its primal law. The complete subjugation of the self-principle to the behests, not of authority, but of Supreme goodness, — this is the demand of the primal law.

The demand of entire self-abnegation, made in the original law, furnished the occasion for the rebellion. The same demand still insisted on, even in the terms of reconciliation, notwithstanding a wonderful abatement in man's favor, furnishes the present provocation to rush into the delusions of unbelief.

What is that abatement? The briefest statement is all that our limits will allow. But this will be sufficient to present the whole issue as it

now stands between earth and heaven, or between the soul and God.

In a perfect government, the demands of law can never be relaxed. In human governments, where law is at best but a conventional thing, they may be, and often are, with the greatest advantage to the public good. But any laxity, in enforcing the demands of the Divine law, would be an incurable wound to the happiness of the universe. On the other hand, however, it would be a wound equally incurable to the honor of the Supreme Ruler, and especially of His wisdom, if, on the occurrence of transgression, no way should appear of saving the offender from the law's penalty. For, suppose that all should fall, — and, being both free and fallible, that was clearly within the range of possibility, — where would be God's kingdom? what security for the perpetuity of His throne? Clearly, unless there was some way in which God could manifest His love to the fallen, — that is, some way by which He could recover the fallen, — Evil might yet prove stronger than God. This, undoubtedly, was the ambition and the expectation of Satan: "I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." On

what was this expectation grounded? Clearly on the belief so seemingly rational, so apparently irrefragable, that God could not maintain His law consistently with grace to its violators; could not remain immaculately holy, and yet give full expression to His hitherto supposed illimitable love. Such was the hope of the arch-apostate; and it seems but rational to suppose that an apprehension of this nature had begun to throw its shadow over the ranks of the unfallen. To demolish by one blow the hopes of the one, and the possible doubts of the other, to settle for ever the foundations of His throne, not merely, nor perhaps chiefly, to manifest the immensity of His love in His treatment of a fallen race, though doubtless that was one of His motives, — but to the intent that it might be known through the ages and through the hierarchies in heavenly places, that the wisdom of God was equal to any emergency, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. That the law has been more honored in the heavenly places since the Coequal of God stooped to be subject to it, than it would have been by the obedience of the first Adam and of all of his posterity; that by His subjection to it and suffering under it, in their nature and in

their stead, He has made it right that as many as He chooses to save should be absolved from their penal liabilities; that His righteousness, considered simply as a means of honoring the government of Heaven, is worth more, deserves more, than the personal righteousness of all creatures, — these are the first principles of the oracles of God. And what is the result? — the result and the reward of this Infinite loyalty?

The Father has given all things into His hands, — things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. The things which were once in the hands of law, in the hands of justice, are now given into the hands of love. To what end? That He should give eternal life; that He should give it, so far as the honor of the gov ernment is concerned, without any conditions, to all who will receive it. Will you receive it? That is the only question. There lies the whole issue between the soul and God.

All depends on the spirit of your mind. Whilst the mind is carnal, any terms which a holy God might propose, would be alike ungrateful; for any terms which God should propose, must strike at the root of your mortal disease, your aversion to His law. The design of the gospel is to rekindle your original, your constitutional, sym-

pathy with the law of God, which, you must know, is the ultimate condition of the happiness of your nature. For this purpose, it removes every obstacle arising from the past, and every fear connected with the future, — provided there is one thing, — a simple purpose of the heart, as simple as the opening of the eye to the light, — a real purpose of heart, under the pressure of these high encouragements, to seek after God, — a real purpose of self-crucifixion in the interests of a higher love. That one thing lacking, then follows the exigency to which I referred, and which I shall now describe, as the real radical cause of all unbelief.

Not from the force of circumstances, not from any external necessity, but from a principle rooted in the heart, every individual of the race is an enemy to the government of Heaven. It is the enmity of sin to holiness. The overture asks him to lay aside his enmity, offers him pardon, and far more than pardon, if he does so, with the alternative of utter destruction in case of refusal, — utter destruction by the law of his own constitution. What shall he do? For here, you will observe, that sin has not only made a schism between earth and heaven, but it has made a schism in the soul itself.

If the will and affections are entirely alienated, the understanding and conscience for a time at least retain their fidelity. Hence the dilemma. What shall he do? It is a government which he hates, — to get entirely free from it is the motive of the revolt. There is no hope of a compromise. Amnesty for the past, but submission for the future; submission to the very laws and restrictions which in his heart he hates, — these are the only terms which the government can offer. The amnesty is well enough, but how can he heartily submit to the former government?

On the other hand, however, how can he carry in his bosom the perpetual consciousness of being at enmity with Heaven? How can he endure for a single moment the horrible apparition of Divine vengeance, — made sure not merely by the threatening appended to the overture, but by a light which is prior to, and confirmatory of it, — a light in his own mind which testifies that the government is right, that the guilt of rebellion lies upon his soul, and that wrath is certainly impending? How shall he act in such circumstances?

Between these mutually opposing forces, hatred of the duty and dread of the penalty, as long as they are evenly balanced the full and final action of the soul in regard to the overture remains un-

determined. Once rid of this thick drop of believing terror which clogs the conscience, and the difficulty is passed. But how is he to get rid of it? It is just here that unbelief comes to his rescue. Pressed on two sides, — on one side by aversion to the government, which makes submission inadmissible; on the other, by the threatened penalty, which makes resistance most perilous, — the party in rebellion rushes for relief into a network of delusion, the contrivance of a common adversary, which, hiding for the present his tremendous danger, beguiles him at length into perdition, without remedy.

But how is this practicable? Is a man's belief dependent on his will? Can he believe what he chooses to believe? This brings us to our last question: How is unbelief practically developed? in other words, What is unbelief, considered as a process of the mind? We have seen what it is as a process of the heart. But the heart cannot accomplish its purpose without the aid of a mental delusion. How is this delusion effected? Unbelief is an instance, the highest of its kind, of that very common fact in human history, that in any conflict between the understanding and the passions, if the conflict be protracted, means will be found, sooner or later, of reducing the better

principle to a state of subserviency. The conflict in this case is between the deepest passion of human nature and the law of God, or the light from God which condemns it. The passion is susceptible of infinite variations as to form and expression, but its essence is self-pleasing, supreme self-regard.

This is, comprehensively, the sin of our nature, — the root of all other sins, and the citadel of their strength, — combining the power of a settled principle with the rage, when occasion demands it, of a furious passion. Domineering self-regard, this is the evil against which, as most opposite to His own nature, as well as destructive to the order of the universe, the Holy One opposes His everlasting justice. From that justice, by an eternal necessity, there is but one way of escape; viz., by a change of nature, — by a moral renovation. For such a renovation a full provision is made in the gospel. I wish to show you how, by a wilful delusion, this provision is made ineffectual.

The all-absorbing fact, which the gospel reveals, is the advent of a Being in our nature, who claims to be the Son of God, and the Saviour of mankind. It is said, Believe in Him, and you shall be saved. Believe in what? In the his-

torical fact of His appearance in the flesh, of His humiliation and sacrifice? In the doctrine, that by this sacrifice He has rolled off the burthen of our sin, and restored us to fellowship with God? Of what significance is that fact to you, unless your sins are felt to be a burthen, which will crush you to hell, unless you are delivered? Bear in mind the vital connection which there must be between believing in Christ as a Saviour, and believing in your own ruin as a sinner. If you cannot see the atrocity of sin, and that you are the subject of it in all its atrocity, how can you attach any meaning to the agony of the Cross? Before a man can believe with the heart in the testimony of the Scriptures concerning Christ and salvation, he must believe with his conscience in the testimony of the same Scriptures concerning himself and damnation. Who is it that tells us of destroying soul and body in hell, — of the man who lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment, — of the resurrection of damnation, — of the worm that never dies, and the fire that shall never be quenched, — of everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? and all this, if you will lay your mind open to the testimony, and especially the testimony of the Great Teacher, — all this, simply because they lived to please themselves.

Here, then, is the point at which unbelief begins. You have no difficulty in accepting, however illogically, the historical fact, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. The difficulty begins with those moral facts which underlie the historical and explain their necessity, — with those facts respecting the nature and desert of sin, which rest upon the authority of conscience, informed by revelation, and which are fundamental to the overture. To accept these, in connection with the historical, would be equivalent to a moral renovation. The acceptance of the other without these, i.e., of the historical without the moral, is simply a mental delusion, and a wilful delusion. For God has endowed you with a spiritual faculty, by which, if you will, the moral truth in the case may be just as clearly discerned as the historical.

It is not to be imagined, my hearers, that our beneficent Creator, who has not given being even to the lowest animal, without endowing him with a self-preserving instinct, should have created an immortal being without giving him at least equal advantages. Having environed him with laws which cannot be transgressed without the saddest effects, He must have endowed him with an instinctive perception, both of the nature and the

consequences of transgression, — not so instinctive as to supersede the exercise of reason, and the necessity of care and vigilance and energy; but all-sufficient in the exercise of these qualities not only to have preserved his original purity, but all-sufficient still, in connection with the provisions of the gospel, to deliver him out of all his miseries.

Therefore it is, that our Saviour has placed the condemnation of man upon this ground: "This," says he, "is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil; for every one that doeth evil," — who is conscious of doing evil, — "hateth the light, and neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Unbelief, to describe it by a figure, is the result of simply closing the eye of the soul against the light which comes to it from God. It is assumed in this figure, that the soul has an organ, the use and office of which, in spiritual concerns, corresponds to that of the eye in the structure of the body. We call this the eye of the soul, because as in all its outward movements the body follows, and must follow, the guidance of the eye, so in all its spiritual movements the

soul follows, and must follow, the guidance of the conscience.

Let us pursue the illustration one step farther. Supposing a transparent atmosphere and an abundance of light: the healthful and vigorous movement of the body under the guidance of the eye depends on a single and very simple condition; viz., that the eye be open. This is the condition upon which hangs salvation, — the simple condition of keeping the eye open. Light has come into the world. Keep the eye open, and salvation will follow as a necessary consequence. Here lies the only difficulty. Every thing, my hearers, in the boundless eternity which lies before you, hangs upon this simple condition, — *Cover not your sin;* and, as it rises before you in all its enormity, cast yourself naked and helpless on the word of the Saviour, and persist in doing so to the jaws of Death, and you will find yourself in the arms of Mercy.

Let me recapitulate and conclude.

The carnal mind, we have seen, is enmity against God because of His moral government. To its apprehension, the only object of that government is to support its own prerogative. Of course, such a government must be hateful. But need I say that that apprehension arises entirely

from the consciousness of guilt? Remove that consciousness by a free pardon, and then see how the subject will appear. Who can believe that the Divine government is a despotism?

Looking at it in the light of a disinthralled understanding, is it not obvious that the government of Heaven must be just what every benign government on earth is, — viz., a provision, and the best which could be made for the happiness of its subjects? By the government of Heaven is meant that provision which has been made by the Supreme Disposer; not primarily for the support of His own prerogative, but primarily for the happiness of the myriads which His power had brought into being. Assuming the existence of an infinite, all-wise, and benevolent Creator, it is inconceivable that, as the Author of the universe, He should not have made some simple provision for its happiness. This provision is contained in the laws by which it is governed, simply and entirely in its system of legislation. If it had been the main purpose of this discourse, as it is certainly a part of its purpose, to vindicate the beneficence of this system, we should have begun with a cursory view, at least, of that part of it in which, though of the least significance in itself, beneficence is manifest beyond the possibility of

cavil. I mean the laws of the natural universe. And now, in conclusion, let me use an argument from those laws to abate, if it may not entirely remove, a general prejudice, which is felt by every unreconciled heart in contemplating the government of Heaven,—a prejudice which stands at the threshold of all our difficulties. It is fundamental to a successful pursuit of salvation, that the understanding should possess a satisfactory conviction of the Divine benignity, including, of course, the idea of justice.

But, in tracing the workings and windings of unbelief, we are soon brought to the conclusion that the last pillar, on which it rests for support, is a suspicion, — it cannot be called a conviction, for it relates to a matter upon which nothing can be logically established; it can only proceed, therefore, from the coldness of the heart,—it finds, I say, its last refuge, the last hiding-place for its shame, in a cold suspicion, that, in the primary laws and arrangements of the moral universe, or of that part of the system which pertains to the government of free agents, the Supreme Disposer has acted with a degree of unfairness, not to call it malevolence, — that, in the constitution given to these agents, He has left, in the exercise of His sovereignty, a point of weakness which excuses

at least, if it does not entirely justify, their subsequent rebellion.

I appeal to that light of reason which, blessed be its Author, still lingers in our apostate humanity, to say how far it is probable that He, who has shown such a marvellous kindness in the constitution of our lower nature, should have been moved by any less in determining the laws of our immortal existence. Is it probable that He who fitted up this beautiful habitation for the temporary residence of man, should have had any but the kindest thoughts in framing the constitution of that higher world, of which the present is but the vestibule?

I call upon the laws of nature to vindicate my God.

Tell us, ye mute but mighty agencies in whose perfect equipoise, and whose exact revolutions, a foundation has been laid for the durability of this material system, at whose command ye were first marshalled to your spheres, and whose orders ye are constantly fulfilling? Tell us, ye inorganic elements of earth and air, from whose breath ye receive the virtue which impregnates the organized seed, and causes it to bring forth, in boundless profusion, a supply for the wants of the animal creation? Tell us whence that law

of the animal nature, by which, after appropriating to its own use the riches of the vegetable kingdom, it is constrained, with so little reluctance, to submit to the rule, and to labor for the good of the rational? Above all, we call upon the rational to answer who established those laws of communication between the sentient principle within him, and the myriad objects of the outer universe, by which all that is good and glorious in the latter, becomes so easily his personal, we may say his patrimonial, possession. And those other laws, even finer, and pregnant with a treasure so much richer, by which mind communicates with mind and soul with soul, in an intercourse which, but for sin, would make earth the symbol and almost the synonyme of Heaven, who was the legislator here? Oh tell me, as you see the sun coming forth from his chamber, awaking in every living thing the consciousness of a fresh existence, the birds filling the air with their melody, the valleys covered over with corn, and the flocks rejoicing on a thousand hills; or, when sitting at your own fireside, where every heart is glowing with the raptures of life, your board spread with every gift of the season, and your loved ones like olive-plants encircling and adorning it; or when, at the close of a day of toil, the calm shades of

evening invite you to repose from care, and you think of the unnumbered blessings which the hours have scattered in their flight; how, at His rebuke, disease has fled from your dwelling, and the spirits of the air only minister to your good; how His skies are ever dropping down upon us the riches of their beneficence, whilst the earth, like a vale of enchantment, spreads beneath our feet, — can you believe, — I appeal to that sense of honor which, with the light of reason, still lingers in our apostate humanity, — that He who meets us with such smiling tenderness in the morning of our being, whilst warning us by deeper intuitions of the insufficiency of these earthly conditions for our highest development; whilst teaching us to regard this earth, with all its pledges of a present affection, merely as the threshold of our being, merely as the school and the playground of our childhood; while inciting us by sterner commands, as well as by loving encouragements, to seek our glory on the theatre of a distant eternity, — can you believe it, that, in the laws pertaining to that eternal existence, in the conditions prescribed for attaining this crown and consummation of our blessedness, He has shown Himself only an unfeeling taskmaster?

What must be the doom of him, blessed with the light of all these revelations, who will have nothing to say at the final judgment but "Lord, I knew thee, that Thou art an hard man"?

THE END.

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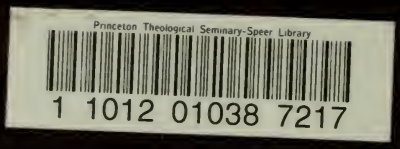
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